

Inspection and Monitoring of Children's Homes

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Children's Homes are regulated and inspected by **Ofsted** as required by the Care Standards Act 2000. Inspections are based on the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and Quality Standards. Every children's home is inspected at least twice a year, receiving one full and one interim inspection.
- 1.2 Under the new framework, judgements are made on:
Overall progress and experiences of children and young people
- How well children and young people are helped and protected
 - Impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers.
- They judge the home according to a four point scale:
- Outstanding
 - Good
 - Requires improvement
 - Inadequate
- 1.3 **Regulation 44** of the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 requires each home to be visited by an employee of the organisation not directly concerned with the conduct of the home and a report to be written. Some visits are carried out by an independent visitor from outside of the Council. The rest are done by Managers in the Children and Young People's Directorate, who are completely independent of the Homes and have no involvement with young people placed in them. Reports of the visits are sent to Homes Managers who respond to any recommendations. The reports are circulated to Ofsted, Responsible Managers and Democratic Services.
- 1.4 **Elected Members** carry out periodic visits to children's homes to monitor the quality of care and the welfare of children and young people. Visits fall within members' corporate parenting responsibilities.

After each visit members report on their observations and recommendations and members are informed of actions taken as a result.

Visits to the Children's Homes have been planned to take place in September and October 2017.

In July 2017, four briefing sessions were delivered by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding to equip Members to undertake the

visits at the Children Homes.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To consider content of report and make appropriate recommendations.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Inspections are a key element of the regulatory function in relation to children's homes. Management visits are a statutory requirement.
- 3.2 Visits by elected members are carried out as part of the Council's Corporate Parenting duties.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Ofsted Inspections:

4.1 The dates and outcomes of inspections are as follows:

4.2

Home	Inspection Type	Date	Judgement
The Willows	Interim	December 2016	Sustained effectiveness
	Full	18 April 2017	Good
Cricklewood	Interim	4 January 2017	Sustained effectiveness
	Full	30 & 31 May 2017	Good
Shine	Interim	30 January 2017	Sustained effectiveness
	Full	21 & 22 August 2017	Good
Bute Walk	Interim	17 February 2017	Sustained effectiveness
	Full	25 & 26 July 2017	Good
402 Sinfin Lane	Interim	16 January 2017	Sustained effectiveness
	Full	June 2017	Requires improvement
Coronation Avenue	Interim	20 December 2016	Improved effectiveness
	Full	17 July 2017	Good

4.3 From December 2016, there have been 12 visits undertaken by Ofsted.

- 4.4 402 Sinfin Lane was informed that it would require improvement. This primarily related to one resident and a full improvement plan was swiftly implemented and is being monitored closely to address the concerns. It is important to note that Ofsted clearly indicated there were no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted. The home will be re-inspected later in the year.
- 4.5 There have been no other serious issues highlighted by the Ofsted inspections.

Elected Members Visits:

- 5.1 There has been four Corporate Parenting training sessions delivered to Derby City Councillors since the last Corporate Parenting Committee. Commitment has been high with 48 of 51 councillors attending including all Cabinet Members. All homes will be visited by the end of October, including The Lighthouse Short-break Unit. Queensferry Gardens is currently being refurbished and due to re-open in December and therefore will not be subject to inspection or member visit this year. Two homes were visited in September and reports received from the visiting councillors.
- 5.2 Cricklewood Children's Home was visited on the 14 September 2017. The report outlined a clear compliance of requirements and notable praise for the management and staff. The issue of boiler repair raised has now been addressed.
- 5.3 Coronation Avenue Children's Home was visited on the 27 September 2017. The report outlined a large number of positives particularly highlighting that all children and young people were in education. A couple of minor concerns were raised with regards to the lawn and cooker. These are due to be addressed within the next 4 weeks
- 5.4 In addition, the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Safeguarding has made independent visits to both 402 and the Willows on the 12 September 2017. These were well received and matters arising have been addressed.

Regulation 44 Visits:

- 6.1 Each home is visited unannounced by an independent officer every month. The following recommendations were made as a result of the Regulation 44 visits, which have taken place over the last period:

- 6.2 **The Willows:** Overall the reports were consistently positive reflecting the good work of the staff and demonstrating need being met. Two recommendations were identified; firstly that weekly reviews with young people to be held and any new young people admitted understand the role of the Regulation 44 visits, including seeking agreement to view personal records. Secondly, to hold one to one meetings with young people to explore their interests and hobbies. Both recommendations have been implemented by the management team and staff.
- 6.3 **402:** Overall reports reflected that the staff at 402 were positive and concerned to do the best they could for the young people. The two key recommendation were; firstly to review the format the young person's MY Placement Action Plan to make it easier for young people who don't have the reading skills or patience to engage with and understand what the home is trying to do for them and secondly, to ensure that plans and risk assessments are updated in as timely a manner as possible. Both recommendations were immediately followed up by management and changes implemented.
- 6.4 **Bute Walk:** All reports were positive and there were no major issues identified.
- 6.5 **Coronation Avenue:** All reports were positive and no major issues identified. Work has been initiated to improve life skills work.
- 6.6 **Cricklewood:** Overall reports were positive. Two recommendations currently under development and to be reviewed by November are; firstly to explore new methods by which to capture young people's views in addition to questionnaires and secondly, to send parental feedback forms by keyworkers on a regular basis.
- 6.7 **Shine:** Overall reports highlighted a number of positives and children's needs were being met. The key recommendations related to staff training of both IT systems and corporate policy. In addition the wishes and feelings of children needed required strengthening. It should be noted that Shine now has a new Manager in place, who is aware of their responsibilities and actions to ensure the Home is working within its regulated activities and all actions are scheduled to be completed by the end of October 2017.
- 6.8 The actions taken in response to Regulation 44 visits are complimented by in depth Regulation 45 monitoring by each Home Manager on a monthly basis and then monitored for assurance the Service Manager and Head of Service.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 None at this stage

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Suanne Lim
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IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 The average cost of a place in Derby's children's homes compares favourably with similar placements in other local authorities and the independent sector.

Legal

- 2.1 Children's homes are regulated by Ofsted and are required to comply with National Minimum Standards.

Personnel

- 3.1 Staff working in children's homes are subject to Enhanced Vetting and Barring checks and expected to conform to high standards of conduct and performance.

IT

- 4.1 None.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and appropriate monitoring put in place.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 Children's homes are fully compliant with Health and Safety legislation and policies. General Risk Assessments and Stress Risk Assessments are regularly updated and managers have received appropriate training.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 Environmental sustainability is promoted, for instance by recycling, heating efficiency and insulation in so far as the design of the building allows. Roofing and cavity wall insulation has been installed in some buildings.

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 A five year programme of replacement and refurbishment is under way and has been the subject of separate reports to the Corporate Parenting Board.

Risk Management

- 9.1 The Business Continuity Plan contains an assessment of risks and control measures in place.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 The report contributes to the following Council objectives:
Good quality services that meet local needs.