



Report sponsor: Suanne Lim, Director of Early Help & Children's Social Care
Report author: Sharon Green, Head of Service Children's Residential Care

Inspection and Monitoring of Children's Homes

Purpose

- 1.1 To provide the Corporate Parenting Committee with an overview of Derby City Council's Children Residential Homes internal and external inspections.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 *Under the 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
- 1.4 They judge the home according to a four point scale:
 - **Outstanding**
 - **Good**
 - **Requires improvement**
 - **Inadequate**
- 1.5 **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. Visits are carried out by an independent visitor who has been employed by the Service. Reports of the visits are sent to Homes Managers who respond to any recommendations. The reports are circulated to Ofsted, the Responsible Individual, Senior Managers and Democratic Services.
- 1.6 **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.

Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To note the content of the report, as inspections are a key element of the regulatory function in relation to Children's Homes. Management visits are a statutory requirement.
- 2.2 To note the content of the report as a Corporate Parent.

Reason(s)

- 3.1 Children Residential Homes are inspected at regular intervals by independent Regulation 44 Inspectors, Ofsted and Members. The inspection reports provide the Service and the Homes Managers with information to support appropriate changes to be made that will enhance a young person experience whilst in our care.
- 3.2 Ofsted judgements are made with regard to what measurable progress has been evidenced towards children achieving their potential and how they are helped to do so.

Supporting information:

- 4.1 Overview of the Ofsted inspections, Assurance Visit and Monitoring Visits that have taken place since July 2022 – July 2023 .
- 4.2 The Children Residential Homes are inspected usually at least twice a year, receiving one full and one interim inspection. Where a Home is judged to be 'inadequate', notification is issued to the Home with a timescale given to undertake the actions

Ofsted Inspection Outcomes:

Home	Inspection Type	Date	Judgement
Home A	Full Inspection	25/07/2022	Requires Improvement to be Good
	Assurance Visit	05/01/2023	No judgement given
	Full Inspection	02/08/2023	Good
Home B	Full Inspection	21/03/2023	Good
Home C	Full Inspection	08/02/2023	Requires Improvement to be Good
	Full Inspection	25/05/2023	Requires Improvement to be Good
Home D	Monitoring Visit (temp closed)	07/03/2023	No judgement given
	Full Inspection	06/07/2023	Requires Improvement to be Good
Home E	Full Inspection	05/09/2022	Good

Ordinarily, placement matching is supported and results following a young person's presenting needs are matched into a vacancy within a Residential alongside the needs of the other young people and children who are already placed within the Home. Where there are Homes located on one site, there is an expectation that placement matching will take into consideration the presenting needs of all young people resident across the whole site. The Manager of the Home is expected to undertake all considerations when making a decision as whether to accept a placement or not.

Staff resources – recruitment and retention of staff has continued to be a challenge over the last two years'. It is recognised nationally that recruiting staff to work within the care sector is challenging. The Service has been working back regionally with other Local Authorities on a recruitment campaign, which should hopefully attract more candidates into the profession.

There has been changes in Management (Manager and Deputy roles) across 4 out of the 5 Homes over the past year, which in itself has created opportunities to develop internal staff. This has proved successful with the Home that had been closed, reopened with a new Manager and Deputy who were able to understand the systems in place.

The Service changed its approach for a period of time as to how staff were recruited, in that Managers were actively seeking staff via their Facebook and LinkedIn accounts. This proved successful, however

The Service has not seen an impact on the quality of care however it should be noted that there are more inexperienced staff versus experienced staff which presents challenges as experience comes with time.

Training

The Service continues to receive training both virtual and face to face.

There has been success in staff undertaking the Level 4 Apprenticeship programme – children and young people in social care. This training is part of the regulatory requirements and staff cannot undertake an Apprenticeship without firstly having their functional skills qualification (Maths / English). Where staff are employed without these qualifications, support is put into place to aid their learning and completion of the qualifications.

Education

The Service continues to engage with Virtual School leads each month. Education is a topic that is discussed within the Enhanced Care Planning Meetings that are held each month and attended by the Home's Manager, Social Worker, Education leads, LAC Nurse and external professionals such as Advocacy (CGL).

One young person secured an Apprenticeship, but decided that this was not what they wanted to do due to the start and finish times of the work and they had to focus on College, which they found overwhelming.

The majority of our children and young people are participating in some form of education, however there are some young people where it continues to be a challenge to participate in education due to various factors including their perception of School and School not being able to meet needs due to the behaviours.

There is an expectation that support will be offered both in the Home by the staff and outside agencies such as a Tutor – Home schooling, however where they do not engage with Tutoring, staff will try and engage them in activities with an educational theme such as baking – weighing/measuring ingredients, science/maths/english - worksheets delivered in a creative and fun way (making models and science experiments) and themed nights focusing on culture and diversity. There has also been days out arranged to support children and young people understand particular topics such as the Space Centre (Science).

The older young people have undertaken fire safety and first aid courses, which they have enjoyed. They receive certificates where completed.

Health

Monthly meetings were being held each month with the Looked after Care Nurses (LAC), and these had proved successful in supporting Managers to identify where there were presenting issues with their children and young people.

Drop in sessions have been held, specifically around the needs of the young people and children have been undertaken by the LAC Nurses. This work included, sexuality, positive relationships, substance misuse, personal hygiene, healthy eating and sleeping and they also provided support on Diabetes to one Home.

Given the success of these meetings each month, it has been agreed that these meetings can move to quarterly.

It should be noted that the majority of young people and children within residential care have attended the Dentist, Opticians and health reviews.

The areas of Health and Education are scrutinised by Ofsted during inspections.

Elected Members Visits:

- 5.1 There were visits undertaken in June 2023 to all the Children's Residential Homes by Cllr Whitby. Cllr Whitby was accompanied by the Director of Children's Early Help and Social Care – Suanne Lim. There were no concerns raised in relation to those visits.

Regulation 44 Visits:

- 6.1 Regulation 44 visits take place at each Home on a monthly basis. A quarterly report has been produced to allow Children's Social Care to monitor progress of visits undertaken across the Service.
- 6.2 **Home A:** No major issues were identified. This Home had a new Manager join the Service.

Education was highlighted as an ongoing recommendation due to two young people who although enrolled with education, struggled to attend or engage. This has been due to a number of reasons including fluctuating mental health and refusing to engage. The Homes management and staff team were consistent in their approach by encouraging and supporting attendance.

- 6.3 **Home B:** No major issues were identified. This Home had a change in Deputy Manager.

The physical fabric of the building was highlighted as needing attention.

- 6.5 **Home C:** This Home saw a change in the management during the last year, with two Managers and two Deputy changes as well as reduced staffing.

There were various recommendations raised across the last year, however the focus was around a young person living in the Homes independence in that there needed to be more support provided and engagement in term of personal care. The young person was struggling with daily tasks however was not engaging with the support offered or the staff.

Supervisions, recordings and staff development have been areas for improvement also, This is ongoing due to changes in the staff team, staff reductions and challenges in the home with the behaviours of the young people.

- 6.6 **Home D:** This Home has been temporarily closed since January 2020 but reopened in May 2023.

The recommendations featured work to be completed on bullying within the Home Encouraging to engage in education as not engaging. 1 engaged hit and miss.

- 6.7 **Home E:** No major issues were identified. Education engagement – right education to be found

Case recording has been an issue across the Service.

1;1s top tip cards, new templates, peer support team meetings dip sampling exemplar provided. Inexperienced staff, incidents across homes and interventions

- 6.8 Managers are expected to identify remedial actions via an Action Plan where issues are picked up on a Regulation 44 Visit.

- 6.9 The actions taken in response to Regulation 44 visits are complimented by monthly Regulation 45 monitoring by the Manager, and are overseen by the Deputy Head of Service.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 7.1 Young people and Children are consulted, with a view to ascertaining their wishes and feelings. This is recorded in their Care Plans, Liquid Logic (LCS) recording, 1:1 meetings and young people's log of meetings. All concerns are recorded and responded to.
- 7.2 Young people and Children are also encouraged to attend the Children in Care Council meetings to provide their views and feedback in relation to their care and their Home.
- 7.3 Young people and Children have the opportunity to complete a Point in Time (PIT) survey which is distributed by Ofsted. Staff encourage young people and children to complete these by offering incentives. Where any concerns are raised, these are reported back to the Service to investigate/respond to.
- 7.4 Young people and Children also have independent advocacy support who act on their behalf, enabling them to raise concerns from someone who is not associated with the Home they live in.

- 7.5 There are other professionals that attend the Homes where young people and children have the opportunity to air their views about their care and Home. These include; Regulation 44 Visitor, Ofsted and the Responsible Individual.

Other options

- 8.1 None

Financial and value for money issues

- 9.1 The average cost of a placement within a Derby's Children's Residential Home has increased due to the challenges with staff recruitment, additional hours and the use of Agency. The Service operates to a baseline in respect of staff numbers, however where additional staff are required to support a young person due to their behaviours, this incurs additional costs to the Service.

Legal implications

- 10.1 Children's residential Homes are regulated by Ofsted and are required to comply with National Minimum Standards.

Climate implications

- 9.1 No climate implications

Socio-Economic implications

- 10.1 No socio-economic implications

Other significant implications

- 11.1 None

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal		
Finance		
Service Director(s)	Suanne Lim, Director Early Help and Childrens Social Care	13.10.2023
Report sponsor		
Other(s)		

Background papers:
List of appendices: