

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	06/11/2013
Inspector	Norma Welsby
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	22/05/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This registered children's home is run by a charitable trust and provides care and accommodation for children and young people on both a long-term basis, and for short stay breaks. The service provides eight short break and two long-stay residential places for children and young people who have learning disabilities and may also have physical disabilities.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Good progress	The children's home has demonstrated continued improvement in quality of care and outcomes for children and young people and where appropriate has addressed all requirements and the large majority of recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection.
Satisfactory progress	The children's home has maintained quality of care and outcomes for children and young people and where appropriate has addressed all requirements and the majority of recommendations that were raised at the previous inspection.
Inadequate progress	The children's home has failed to address one or more requirements and/or has not met the majority of recommendations and/or the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people have declined since the last full inspection.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **satisfactory progress**.

The previous full inspection of this service conducted in May 2013 made an overall judgement of adequate. The purpose of this unannounced inspection was to assess the progress that has been made since the full inspection. As a result of this inspection one requirement and four good practice recommendations have been made.

This service provides nurturing and individualised care. Young people benefit from having at least one to one care support. Their diverse and complex needs are well known to staff who strive to ensure that young people enjoy their stay. Young people on long-term placements benefit from having their own facilities and dedicated space, while also enjoying opportunities to mix with friends and peers.

Since the full inspection the service has made satisfactory progress. There have been several improvements made to the physical environment. An on-going redecoration

programme maintains high standards, both in bedrooms and communal areas. The removal of audit stickers from furnishings has improved the homeliness of the environment. A domestic cabinet has been provided so that wipes and other items used by young people at mealtimes can be discretely stored. This ensures that the privacy and dignity of young people is protected.

Following a recommendation made at the last inspection the Registered Manager is working more openly with other professionals including placing social workers and the local authority designated officer (LADO). This ensures information relating to the safety and welfare of vulnerable young people is appropriately shared and considered in their best interests.

Care practices have been reviewed, specifically in relation to managing challenging behaviour. This means staff have further developed their de-escalation techniques and this has achieved good outcomes. There is now a very clear understanding that the use of 'door holding' as a behaviour management strategy, however brief and even in difficult circumstances, is unacceptable and is not used. An examination of records relating to physical interventions confirmed that incidents remain low and that door holding is no longer used. While records are generally satisfactory, some are not detailed enough as they do not fully describe the actual physical intervention. Nor do these records fully demonstrate that young people have had the opportunity, through diverse communication methods, to discuss the incident or had their views recorded. These shortfalls were highlighted to the Registered Manager as was the importance of his role in monitoring these records to ensure good standards of recording are consistently maintained.

Since the last inspection the service has appointed a new human resources manager and has pursued a robust recruitment drive. Despite these efforts the service has struggled to fill all its vacancies. Further work is taking place to look at additional incentives to attract suitable applicants. In the meanwhile staffing levels are being fully maintained through the use of bank staff. The two recommendations made at the last inspection relating to staffing have been addressed. Written evidence is maintained that references are verified and bank staff are being formally supervised alongside permanently appointed staff.

Improvements have also been made in respect of provider visits and the manager's review of quality of care. There is more evidence of consultation with young people, family, staff and placing authorities and how the information gathered during these processes informs the report and further developments in the service. In relation to provider visits a further recommendation has been made as a result of this inspection, as it was found that not all key records, such as restraints, are examined at each visit. Finally, at the full inspection a requirement was made that the service notify Ofsted and other agencies of serious incidents; this has been complied with, ensuring information relating to the welfare of young people is appropriately shared and considered.

Areas for improvement

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose which shall include a description of the measure used and in particular that the description is detailed enough to fully describe the physical intervention. (Regulation 17B (3) (c))	08/12/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that visits carried out under Regulation 33 include relevant checks set out in regulations and guidance and checks of any disciplinary measures and use of restraint and records of missing person's reports (NMS 21.7)
- ensure that the registered manager regularly monitors, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the homes policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring (NMS 21.2)
- ensure all children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss incidents of restraint they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by, with a relevant adult (NMS 3.17)
- ensure where any sanctions, disciplinary measures of restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home. (NMS 3.18).

About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the progress made by the provider since the last full inspection, identifies any further strengths, any areas for improvement and makes judgements as outlined in the *Inspection of children's homes – framework for inspection*.