

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC012021
Inspection date	16/01/2013
Inspector	Bridgette Lowe
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	02/08/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home provides education and residential care for up to 30 pupils, from 8 to 19 years of age who have severe and complex learning difficulties, associated with autism. The home operates as a charitable trust, and being a school as well, it is approved by the Department for Education.

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 **good progress**.

At the last full inspection August 2012 the school was judged as outstanding in overall effectiveness and all areas relating to outcomes, quality of care, young people's safety and leadership and management. One recommendation was raised in relation to Eagles Unit works and programmes of redecoration being undertaken in a timelier manner. The work completed within this unit has been completed to a very high standard. Excellent bathroom units have been sourced and fitted which enable young people with complex and challenging behaviour to wash and shower more independently. These facilities are enabling young people to develop their independent living skills and self-help skills extensively as they are easier for young people to use, with regulated temperatures and push button workings. This also prevents young people from flooding bathroom areas and allows them more dignity as staff may not have to support young people as much with their intimate care needs. The bathroom facilities are also much homelier in appearance as previous fittings were institutionalised in their appearance and not always robust enough to withstand the challenges and wear and tear of young people with challenging behaviour and autism. As a result of these new facilities young people's outcomes

have improved as they are being much better prepared for adulthood as they are becoming more independent.

In addition to the new bathroom facilities, a new laundry room has been fitted in Eagles Unit. Young people's outcomes have improved as they are now able to practice their laundry and life skills. Staff reported that young people enjoy undertaking laundry tasks and have learnt these new skills very quickly. These new skills are preparing young people for adulthood and enabling them to become more independent.

Redecoration continues to be undertaken in many areas throughout the school and units on a regular basis. The maintenance and upkeep of the environment is given high priority as many areas can become damaged or worn due to young people's challenging behaviour. However the environments look homely with ample space for young people to play, relax and learn new skills.

The school has been successful at securing planning permission to build a new purpose built unit within the school grounds. This work has started and when completed will benefit young people with an environment built around their specific individual needs.

Young people are benefitting from improved links with the children and adolescent mental health services. The Registered Manager has secured a link psychiatrist to ensure all young people's emotional and mental health needs are well met. This improved link will benefit young people, families and staff to ensure young people's individual emotional needs are identified and met.

Young people continue to benefit from excellent care practices and safeguarding arrangements. Behaviour management plans, techniques and practice are continually scrutinised and monitored. It is clear that the vast majority of young people's behaviour continues to improve compared to when they first joined the school. As with many young people with autism, changes to routine such as Christmas and other unforeseen changes may impact on young people's behaviour. However the staff are extremely adept at foreseeing any planned changes and make arrangements to support young people through these anxious periods very successfully. Since the last inspection 2 notifications have been made to Ofsted. Both incidents have been managed extremely well and young people continue to be safe and well.

It was evident that young people are extremely relaxed in the company of staff and were openly communicating their needs through their chosen communication technique. Staff continue to reflect on their practice and communication skills to ensure they understand and meet the individual needs of young people, many of whom have no verbal communication. This has resulted in young people being less anxious and in turn less challenging behaviour is exhibited.

The Registered Manager continues to undertake regular and rigorous monitoring with close communication involving placing social workers and families for the benefit of

young people. Staff continue to receive regular and good quality supervision to enable them to deliver the highly effective care and support to young people with autism and challenging behaviour.

There are no requirements or recommendations made as a result of this inspection.

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*.