

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC012021
Inspection date	25/03/2014
Inspector	Bridget Goddard
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	11/09/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2014

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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, as it is 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**.

This home had its full inspection in September 2013. It received a judgement of good overall, with one requirement and two recommendations. Since then, the home has met both the requirement and the recommendations, and has made good progress.

The requirement concerned revising the behaviour management policy to ensure that all behaviour management strategies were included, and that local authorities were routinely informed of the use of such strategies. The policy has been appropriately reviewed, and now includes the possible use of non-physical but restrictive strategies. The relevant local authority is now routinely informed about the use of particular behaviour management strategies, and these are regularly discussed to achieve minimum usage. This means that there is a greater transparency about the use of such strategies, which enables appropriate scrutiny.

The first recommendation concerned updating the safeguarding policy. This has been

appropriately completed, and now contains clearer references to source documents which remove any possible confusion.

The second recommendation concerned ensuring that all parts of the home are well-maintained and decorated. This is now the case, and young people benefit from the generally pleasant and ordered environment, as well as their highly personalised and spacious bedrooms.

The home has competently dealt with some significant safeguarding concerns, and has appropriately involved the local authority designated officer in their decision-making. They have recently devised and delivered some internal training for support staff, which has been effective in detailing some of the complexities around safeguarding concerns. This helps develop both a shared understanding and a consistent approach towards young people across all staff.

Although day-to-day practice in key areas such as behaviour management is to a high standard, policies do not routinely reference the requirements detailed in the Children's Home Regulations 2001 (as amended), nor the guidance in the National Minimum Standards. This means there is a risk of incorrect application of policies in key areas.

Young people generally continue to make exceptional progress in this home. For example, some young people no longer need an intrusive level of staffing for their routine activities, and others have developed independence skills such as going out in the community, and shared shopping.

The home also continues to demonstrate the delivery of an excellent quality of care to young people. For example, the home has recently trained a group of staff as advocates to 'put themselves in a young person's shoes' for a day. This has resulted in reinforcement of practice that stretches and supports the young person, and also a list of where practice for that young person could be improved. These findings will form the basis of an individualised action plan. This initiative has both improved staff skills in personalisation and the quality of care experienced by individual young people.

One recommendation has been made as a result of this inspection.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all staff's work is consistent with the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 (as amended), and the National Minimum Standards. (NMS 21.3)

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*.