

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	26/03/2012
Inspector	Maureen Hamer
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	22/09/2011
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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 (March 2011)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

A national charity owns and operates this children's home. Short break and respite care is provided for children and young people with disabilities up to the age of 18 years. The centre offers a range of services from daycare to overnight and weekend stays. Up to six children and young people can be cared for overnight at any one time.

Progress

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

At the last inspection in September 2011 the overall effectiveness of the service was judged as good.

This short breaks provision continues to work with children and parents to ensure that the service provides positive experiences for children. Children are supported to develop their life and communication skills during their short stay in this setting. Requirements identified at the last inspection have been met. The necessary details required when reporting measures of control and discipline are included in the electronically held records. Children's files have been updated and now record the necessary details so that information held on children is comprehensive.

The home has responded positively to addressing the recommendations made at the last inspection although they have not all been met. This includes ensuring that staff's knowledge about the promotion of children's welfare is enhanced and safeguarding training is being provided in addition to on-line training. This contributes to ensuring children are kept safe. Maintaining and promoting children's dignity is important to this service and staff have been reminded of the need not to discuss private issues in hearing distance of children. This ensures that children's sense of self-regard is promoted.

A new system has been developed to monitor staff supervision, however, records on file are not always signed or dated and there are still occasions when staff supervision is missed. At the last inspection a final recommendation was given to ensure that staff references are verified. Staff report that the organisation do not follow up employment gaps. The organisation has a central Human Resources department which manages the recruitment process. The details are shared with the service by use of a database which was viewed at inspection. However, this data base does not contain all the necessary information, for example, about the monitoring of gaps in an employment record.

Risk of children going missing is identified in their risk assessments and actions such as one-to-one supervision is identified to avoid children going missing. The service

has started to update the home's children going missing from care policy but this is not yet in place.

Children are relaxed and interact positively with staff. New children show reduced anxiety as a result of consistent care being provided. There is very good communication with parents and this promotes good continuity of care for children. A new garden is currently being completed which the children have been fully engaged in its design.

Quality assurance measures are in place and actions are taken to address identified weaknesses. The service actively manages shortfalls in service provision, for example, the administration of medicine has recently been reviewed to ensure children's welfare. However, the scale used for auditing fluid medication coming into and out of the home is not accurate and the threshold for reporting changes in weight is unclear. This approach to measuring medication is not used for the purposes of measuring medication given to children and has no impact on their welfare. The views of parents, placing authorities and children are gained to identify strengths and weaknesses of the service, however, this is not systematically undertaken to identify the strengths of the service or to inform service developments.

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
16 (2001)	prepare and implement a procedure to be followed when any child accommodated in a children's home is absent without permission which has regard to any relevant local authority or police protocols on missing children (Regulation (16)(4)(b))	29/06/2012
34 (2001)	provide for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities within the home's quality assurance monitoring system (Regulation (34) (3))	31/05/2012
21 (2001)	ensure that suitable arrangements, are in place, for the recording, handling, safekeeping of any medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation (21)(1))	31/05/2012

Recommendations

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

- maintain a record detailing the time, dates and length of every supervision with each member of staff, including the registered person and that the record is signed by the supervisor and member of staff at the end of supervision (NMS 19.5)
- ensure that all people working in the home have their written references verified by telephone enquiries. (NMS 16.1)