

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC013743
Inspection date	06/02/2013
Inspector	Emeline Evans
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	30/10/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is run by a charitable organisation and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 19 children: 15 children with learning disabilities and up to four places for children with a physical disability. Young people are accommodated in four separate houses: three of which offer residential services; and one provides three places for short break care only.

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 **inadequate progress**.

The last full inspection of this children's home was in October 2012 and the overall effectiveness was judged to be adequate. The home has addressed a number of the requirements and recommendations made. However, the home has not met all the requirements or made progress in areas that impact on the safety of children.

Since the last inspection the restructuring of the staff team has continued. Interim management arrangements are in place and Ofsted has been notified of these arrangements. The acting managers are in the process of completing an application for registering with Ofsted. However, Ofsted had yet to receive these applications at the time of inspection. The re-grouping of this team is still in the early stages and the management team are currently identifying and redeveloping practice and processes. There has been a high amount of staff sickness in recent months and there is a priority for staff and managers to meet the needs of the young people accessing the service. This has resulted in the management team not having enough

time to meet the full requirement of their roles.

The Statement of Purpose has been revised and now includes the staff structure. However, it states the service manager is the acting 'Registered Manager' and it is not clear on the role of the two managers who are in the process of applying for registration with Ofsted. This document still does not include details of the qualifications or experience of the managers or staff team. A children's guide is now in place; this is adapted to the needs of the children currently accessing the service. However, this has yet to be finalised and is not presently in operation.

Records made of the measures of control implemented, now include all the information required by regulation. The home has introduced a comprehensive form to enable staff to gain the views of children following incidents. This is adapted to each young person's preferred method of communication. This process ensures effective monitoring and recording is taking place. Electronic records detailing incidents of challenging behaviour are no longer kept.

Children's care plans are detailed and contain a range of information. Local authority placement plans are now present on children's files. This enables staff to cross-reference the home's care plans with the agreed plan of care on admission. Looked after child review reports are present; this informs staff of current actions needed to meet young people's needs. One of the houses across the site uses listening monitors in the bedrooms due to the complex needs of the young people. The use of the listening monitors is for the purpose of safeguarding certain young people. However, the home has still to seek consent from the placing authorities on the use of these measures. This use of surveillance is also not detailed in young people's placement plans.

The home was asked to ensure that adequate precautions against the risk of fire are put into place. Some health and safety systems in place minimise unnecessary risks to the young people, staff and visitors. There is a clear escape route in the event of fire. However, across the four houses, a number of doors are still being propped open and bedroom doors and designated fire doors are not operating effectively. These doors do not fully close, unless pulled shut and some of the automatic releases are broken. This means that if there was a fire, the doors would need to be released manually in order to provide full protection. The use of key coded pads on some doors is still in place and prevents direct access to designated fire exits. This puts children and staff at risk should there be a fire.

Since the last inspection, staff have been booked to attend training courses to enhance their work with the children. This includes training on autism and methods of communication. A detailed spread sheet is now in operation to evidence when staff have completed training. Staff are in the process of being signed off as competent to deliver stoma care and gastrostomy feeds. This is demonstrating that staff are equipped to meet the needs of the children in placement. Staff who have been with the company for longer than six months are not yet working towards the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma. Therefore, this recommendation is restated. An appraisal system has been introduced for all staff. Staff state that they

are receiving appraisals; however it was not clearly documented when appraisals have taken place. Staff are now routinely receive formal supervision. This allows them regular opportunities to reflect on their practice, discuss the needs of children in their care and receive appropriate management support.

At the last inspection, the management team confirmed that all the necessary recruitment checks are completed before a member of staff starts work. Some information relating to Criminal Records Bureau Checks is contained within the service and accessible to the appropriate people. However, other evidence of recruitment checks is still not maintained at the home. Therefore, it is not possible to ascertain the processes undertaken for the recruitment of staff and their suitability to work with children and young people.

There are clear processes in place for responding to any incidents if a child was missing from care. Staff are now familiar with these processes and this is communicated to the staff team during team meetings.

Regulation 33 monitoring visits are routinely taking place. Therefore, there is independent oversight and scrutiny of the quality of the care being delivered at the home. However, monitoring by the acting manager has not taken place recently and therefore shortfalls may not be fully identified. A six-monthly review of ongoing internal monitoring audits has yet to be carried out and the outcomes reported to Ofsted. This demonstrates that the internal monitoring systems in place are not fully effective in driving forward improvement within the home. Staff spoken to are aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses and express that development plans by the management team are being implemented. However, these plans were not available at the time of inspection. Therefore, the management and staff team are unable to reflect on the progress in the home.

Young people have a good relationship with the care staff and they respond well to the praise and encouragement received. Staff set clear boundaries and young people know what is expected of them. As a result, young people continue to receive structured care, which is planned to meet individual needs.

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
4 (2001)	update the Statement of Purpose to ensure that it includes all of the required information (Regulation 4(1), Schedule 1)	25/03/2013
22 (2001)	obtain consent from the children's placing authorities regarding the use of electronic monitoring devices and ensure that this	25/03/2013

	information is provided in the children's placement plans (Regulation 22(1) (a) (b))	
32 (2001)	take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment; and provide adequate means of escape. (Regulation 32 (1)(a)(b))	15/04/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure the children's guide is in operation and approved by the registered person (NMS 13.3)
- devise and implement a written development plan, reviewed annually, for the future of the home, either identifying any planned changes in the operation or resources of the service, or confirming the continuation of the home's current operation and resource (NMS 15.2)
- ensure that sufficient information (written or electronic) is retained at the home, demonstrating that the recruitment and selection of staff consistently follows good practice, and all applicable current statutory requirements and guidance (NMS 16.2)
- accelerate arrangements for staff to achieve the level 3 Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma (NMS 18.5)
- provide evidence that all staff have their performance individually and formally appraised at least annually (NMS 19.6)
- undertake a review of matters set out in Schedule 6 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001. Reports of these reviews should be completed at six monthly intervals and a copy of every report should be sent to Ofsted within 28 days of completion. (Volume 5 Statutory Guidance Children Act 1989 Children's Homes para 3.14)

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*.