

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC020193
Inspection date	25/03/2014
Inspector	Amanda Ellis
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	10/01/2014
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is registered to provide care for up to 25 children and young people with complex communication, learning difficulties and severe challenging behaviours. It is part of a residential special school and owned by a private organisation.

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, which was carried out in January 2014, the home was judged outstanding. At this inspection, the home is judged to be making good progress.

Since the last inspection, there has been a continued focus on consultation and the participation of young people in the operation of the home. At the time of the inspection, young people were actively involved in the recruitment of social care staff. They were leading interview panels and participating in practical tasks with the applicants. From this, they were able to contribute their views on the performance of the applicants and their potential suitability to work within the home. The nature of this activity is one method used to promote young people's inclusion and participation in their care.

Young people benefit from regular and appropriate contact with their families and friends. This enables them to develop and sustain positive relationships with those people who are important to them. Staff encourage the families to feel part of the home and to visit regularly. One parent said 'They are fantastic. We are very lucky

he has contact with us every other weekend and he has lots of time at home. The home communicates very well with us, which means we are all aware of his current needs. He is as happy to be there as he is at home!’

Staff build effective partnerships with external agencies and social work professionals. One professional discussed working with the home and the progress a young person had made. He said ‘The home is very much on the ball. The young person is making good progress, the most significant of which is that he now understands the consequences to his actions. This means he has greater self-control over his behaviours and therefore he has greater freedom and choice in the things he wants to happen in his life.’

Young people benefit from the communication skills, which are used within the home. They are empowered because staff use individualised communication strategies that utilise a range of non-verbal communication methods. Young people are more self-assured because they can give meaning to and communicate about their daily care, education and experiences. Consequently, young people feel empowered and enabled to have a say about their care and future plans.

A skilled and knowledgeable staff team promote positive behaviour through techniques, which include reward systems, diversion, distraction and de-escalation. Physical interventions continue to be a necessary behaviour management strategy to prevent young people from causing significant harm to themselves or others. The manager scrutinises records and has a good oversight to enable forensic analysis of patterns and trends. The manager evaluates the appropriateness of responses and highlights ‘lessons to be learnt’. Consequently, young people are safeguarded and improved outcomes are promoted.

Skilled and experienced staff implement detailed and comprehensive care planning and risk assessment. Placement planning is proactive and wherever possible, ensures that young are involved in contributing to their care. Regular reviews of plans ensure young people receive consistent care and the staff team has clarity to provide effective support to children.

The quality of the leadership and management of the home is exceptional. The Registered Manager is ambitious and has a clear vision for the direction of the home. Young people’s needs are promoted because the operation of the provision is dedicated to improving their outcomes.

There are clear development plans to promote improvement for young people, staff and the home environment. The effective operation of the home is further reinforced with rigorous monitoring arrangements. Extensive and detailed quality assurance systems are undertaken internally and by external visitors. Rigorous monitoring and effective management of the home drives continued improvement.

Staff are well supported to provide good quality care; they have access to regular training and effective supervision. They describe the managers as supportive and accessible. The management and staff team function effectively and ensure

consistently high standards to the delivery of care to young people.

Young people benefit from an environment that meets the individual needs of the young people who live there. The standard of décor and furnishings throughout the home is generally good; however, there are areas that require attention in relation to maintenance and décor to ensure a more 'homely' feel. Accommodation is spacious and offers space for communal and independent time. Young people are able to personalise their bedrooms and this ensures that their individual tastes and preferences are respected and valued.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. Avoidable hazards are removed as is consistent with a domestic setting. Risk reduction does not lead to an institutional feel. (NMS 10.3)

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*.