

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC020193
Inspection date	28/03/2012
Inspector	Elaine Cray
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	31/08/2011
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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

This home is part of a residential special school which is part of a large private children's care organisation. The service is registered to accommodate 23 children and young people with learning disabilities. The home offers planned long-term placements. The school is registered with the Department for Education.

Progress

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

A full inspection was carried out in August 2011 and the home was given an overall effectiveness judgement of good. One statutory requirement and one recommendation were made as a result of the last inspection. This inspection judges progress made since the last inspection.

The home has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Young people continue to enjoy positive outcomes. Developments and improvements have been made to ensure young people are well cared for and kept safe.

The required improvements to bathrooms are not fully met. One bathroom is partially refurbished to a good standard, but not complete. Another bathroom remains poor in structure, appearance and practicality to meet the needs of the young people. In addition another bathroom lacked good standards of hygiene, with a strong malodour permeating into the corridor of the house. While attempts are made to make each house more homely and personalised, parts of the environment remain institutional in appearance. These observations have led to recommendations for improvement to be made by the independent visitor who makes monthly monitoring visits to the service.

The recommendation to ensure children's views, wishes and feelings are included in the day-to-day running of the home has been firmly embraced and is met. Young people are more confident and enjoy improved behaviour as their wishes, feelings and views are taken into account in their day-to-day experiences and in developing the running of the houses.

Communication processes, including verbal, written, symbol and signing systems provide an opportunity for all young people to contribute their ideas and views to the running and improvement of the service. These systems are integral to the process of empowerment and participation of young people in the home. Young people have their own meetings to discuss what they would like to happen. Their key workers also get to know them very well and proactively advocate on their behalf. Young people have chosen colours and items for their bedrooms, helped choose the new

menu with tasting sessions and enjoy a good range of their favourite activities.

While the previous statutory requirement is not met and additional shortfalls are identified, the young people continue to make good progress. Young people, parents and staff are very proud of the improvements in behaviour, learning new skills and self-confidence. Young people progress because they are supported with meaningful plans for their care which include the views of parents and families. Parental comments about the progress of the children include, 'has come on in leaps and bounds' and, 'fantastic'.

Young people take pride in contributing to and helping with day-to-day living arrangements in the house, including helping to prepare meals. They learn to take responsibility for their own personal care, grow in confidence and develop increasing independence. Young people and their families enjoy quality time both by visiting the school and on home visits. Some young people are now able to try many new experiences, including going shopping, trips to the cinema and going out to eat.

Young people's care and outcomes are monitored. The most recent report from the independent person identified good progress in addressing repeated shortfalls identified in previous reports. While progress has been slow the quality assurance processes and relatively new staffing arrangements in the service are forging developments and improvement. The addition of two new bedsitting rooms is a positive example of the standards for improvement when plans are implemented. The day-to-day care and experiences of young people are monitored by the manager to identify efficiencies and shortfalls. While the manager continues to improve the development of staff by appointing new managers, there is still a shortfall in the frequency of staff supervision.

Three statutory requirements are set as a result of this visit.

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
31 (2001)	ensure all parts of the home are of sound construction and kept in good structural repair externally and internally (Regulation 31.2 (d))	30/04/2012
31 (2001)	ensure all parts of the home are kept clean (Regulation 31.2 (e))	30/04/2012
27 (2001)	ensure all persons employed receive appropriate supervision. (Regulation 27.4 (a))	30/04/2012

Recommendations

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