

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC025940
Inspection date	14/01/2014
Inspector	Sandra Jacobs-Walls
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	04/06/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is one of a small number of residential services run by a voluntary organisation. The purpose of the home is to provide long-term care and support for a maximum of four children or young people with severe learning and/ or physical disabilities.

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**.

This home is currently judged as being a good service overall. However, the home is judged to be making inadequate progress at this interim inspection. While outcomes for young people are good, the home has failed to adequately address one of the three requirements raised at the previous inspection and two of the three recommendations raised previously. In line with Ofsted guidance, failure to resolve previously identified weaknesses, results in the automatic judgement of inadequate progress.

Since the last inspection, the home has merged with a sister home owned and run by the organisation. In conjunction with the merger, there have been a number of significant changes to the organisation's management structure. This includes changes to the home's senior management personnel. Staff and managers comment candidly that the merger of the two homes has proved more difficult than anticipated, with the entire staff group of both home's having to apply for newly created posts. The service has had to work hard at team building, addressing low

staff morale and promote team cohesiveness. Staff and managers acknowledge that this is an on-going process and are clear that as the service continues to develop, that there has been minimal impact on the quality of care provided to young people. This view is supported by the findings of the inspection, as outcomes for young people remain positive.

The home has not made progress in ensuring that all staff members, in particular night staff, receive appropriate supervision. The review of staff supervision records of some night staff, highlight significant gaps in the frequency of formal supervision received. Managers have commented that is also the case for the supervision of other staff members. Manager's also state that concentration on the recent merger of the two homes has contributed to the lapse in the frequency of staff supervision. The lack of regular staff supervision fails to ensure that staff performances are carefully monitored to ensure they safely address the needs of young people. The requirement is repeated at this inspection

One of the recommendations made at the previous inspection that remains unresolved is also in relation to staff supervision. This recommendation highlighted that senior staff failed to maintain appropriate supervision records. These are required to be signed by both the supervisor and supervisee to indicate agreement with discussions held. At this inspection, a number of staff supervision records requested for review were not produced as they were yet to be written up, formally shared with the staff member and presented for signature. This practice does not demonstrate that the two parties have agreed any action as outlined in the supervision session. The recommendation is repeated as this inspection.

The second recommendation made at the last inspection highlighted that staff do not conduct evacuation drills at varying times of the day, in particular early in the morning when young people are likely not to be fully alert. Since the last inspection, no fire drill had been conducted early in the morning. This is to gauge and address any unforeseen issues that may arise for young people and staff at this time of day. The situation is compounded by the fact that some current residents are wheelchair users. This poses additional difficulties with regards to the safe evacuation of all residents. The recommendation is therefore repeated.

The home has successfully addressed all other requirements and recommendations raised at the last inspection. The service has ensured that all staff yet to complete relevant NVQ training have now enrolled onto the appropriate course. This will enhance staff's existing knowledge and skills in caring for young people.

Since the last inspection the home has supplied Ofsted with a regulation 34, quality of care report which comprehensively reviewed the home's function and operation over the last 6 months.

There have been no instances of staff using restraint techniques with any young person since the previous inspection. The staff group have since received training in physical intervention and now have an increased awareness of the reporting requirements as they relate to the use of restraint. This was not the case at the

previous inspection. Improved recording skills promote the accurate documentation of any such incident which is in compliance with the regulations and offers the staff group learning opportunities.

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
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate supervision. (Regulation 27(4)(a))	03/03/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure a written record is kept by the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff. The record is signed by the supervisor and the member of staff at the end of the supervision (NMS 19.5)
- ensure there is an emergency evacuation plan that all staff and young people are familiar with and have practiced at differing times of the day, in particular, during the early morning. (NMS 10.9)

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*.