

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC030367
Inspection date	25/03/2014
Inspector	Clare Davies
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	05/11/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This independent, charitable school is also registered as a children's home. The school follows the principles of care and education developed by Rudolf Steiner. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to a maximum of 42 children and young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties or complex needs. The accommodation for children and young people is provided across seven houses, they are located on, and near to the school site.

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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the full inspection in November 2013, the overall effectiveness rating for this children's home was good with one requirement and three recommendations. The provider has addressed the actions that were raised at the previous inspection and has made satisfactory progress. Two requirements have been made as a result of this inspection.

Young people benefit from structured house meetings that occur regularly. Since the last inspection these meetings have been held every two weeks and provide a forum for young people to raise issues and make a contribution to the development of the home. As a result of listening to young people at these meetings there has been an increase in swimming activities, the purchase of some computers to play games and some new bean bags. Minutes of these meetings are displayed in each house for staff and young people to read, the manager receives all copies. The sharing of

these minutes means everyone can see what has been discussed and decided, monitoring by the manager promotes consistency across the house groups.

A wide range of activities are available within the houses, on the school site and within the local community. General television is not available, children and young people are encouraged to create entertainment and participate in activities. There is a collection of DVDs and trips to the local cinema, many children and young people enjoy music and encouraged to learn how to play instruments. Children and young people enjoy the local countryside for activities such as, fishing and horse riding. A local skate park is popular and some students completed their series of snowboarding lessons with a trip to the slopes. This adventure holiday provided a first time experience of flying for some young people.

Since the last inspection the provider has appointed an activities co-ordinator. This demonstrates the commitment to ensuring that children and young people have plenty of opportunities to engage with a variety of activities. Children and young people are able to take appropriate risks as expected of their age group. Suitable protective clothing is worn for those activities where the risk of injury is greater. Staff also wear protective clothing when supporting children and young people in their activities, this ensures that they are setting a good example of personal safety.

The structure of staff supervision has improved. Records confirm that staff receive feedback on their performance and that there are references to the development objectives identified at the annual appraisal meetings. Staff confirm that they receive regular supervision and that there are many training opportunities. This level of support motivates staff with their professional development. The provider keeps abreast of the many changes in social care and has developed an action plan to ensure that this service is compliant to meet the new regulations for children's homes.

Fire safety is managed well and staff are clear about their responsibilities. The monthly monitoring reports check that procedures are followed and equipment maintained in working order. Children and young people have experienced several practice evacuations so they know what to do in the event of hearing the fire alarm.

A significant development is the introduction of a web-based behaviour management system to capture records of incidents, physical interventions, sanctions, accidents and other events. Staff have received training on how to record on this system. Some staff acknowledged their initial apprehension about this change but report how they can now see the benefits for the young people and themselves. Senior staff are able to draw reports from this system, providing analysis to identify any areas of behaviour that require additional support and strategies. This system improves the quality of reporting and enables staff to get an accurate assessment of incidents occurring. Such data assists with identifying any changes that may be required for the whole setting or individual children and young people.

The residential staff meet collectively at the school site every day to plan for events after school. Staff meet in their house groups for personalised planning while

benefiting from meeting with colleagues and senior staff for consistency across the seven houses. Staff are on site to meet children and young people when their school day finishes which supports them with this transition. Another change to the routine has involved reducing the lunch break and finishing school a little earlier. This action was taken to reduce anxieties involved with waiting to go back into school after lunch time and has increased the time available for after school activities.

Young people report that they enjoy the many activities available, the newsletter provides good examples and photographs of these. In order to have a mobile phone, young people are required to complete an internet safety course. This supports young people in having access to a mobile phone with the guidance to keep themselves safe and use it appropriately.

The senior managers have a good working relationship with the local authority designated officer. There have been some safeguarding incidents and examples where these have been dealt with promptly. One omission was noted of a delay in reporting to the local authority's helpdesk, and another incident where the manager delayed in notifying the young person's social worker. Prompt referrals are required to ensure shared decision making occurs. Delays in reporting incidents potentially puts the safety and welfare of children and young people at greater risk.

There are some good systems for keeping and maintaining records and the introduction of the behaviour management system enhances this area. The manager reports that care plans and risk assessments for children and young people are subject to regular review. However, documents sampled for one young person had no evidence of review for almost a year. The lack of review and out of date risk assessments do not support the staff in providing appropriate day to day care. This means that the care plan does not capture the current individual needs and therefore the promotion of personal development could be hindered.

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
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodate there. In particular, ensure regular reviews of placement plans and risk assessments for all children and young people (Regulation 11 (1)(a))	30/04/2014
16 (2001)	prepare and implement a written policy which sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of any allegation of abuse or neglect. (Regulation 16 (1)(a))	26/03/2014

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*.