

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	10/03/2014
Inspector	Paula Lahey
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	21/11/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This local authority children's home is registered to provide both permanent residency and short-stay breaks for up to eight children and young people who have complex learning disabilities and associated communication and behavioural needs.

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 last inspection in November 2013, the home was judged to provide young people with a good service. Action has been taken to address the two previous requirements and one of the two previous recommendations. As such, the quality of care and outcomes for young people has maintained.

Young people continue to make progress to achieve their individual placement aims and goals. They receive care and attention from a staff team who know their needs well. This has led to their on-going progress with communication, interaction and developing independence. Young people continue to enjoy living in and/or visiting the home and receive competent support and attention during their stay.

The Statement of Purpose has been amended and now contains some additional information regarding the type of service available and how the team manage any emergency placements. The document appropriately describes the service provided and offers increased clarity for those seeking a service.

Improvements have been made to ensure the staff team receive appropriate and useful supervision. One-to-one meetings between the supervisor and supervisee are now purposeful and planned. In addition to regular supervision, meetings are now formally held to de-brief staff following a serious incident. Records show that staff value and make good use of the opportunity to reflect on and learn from incidents. The Registered Manager confirms that he continues to be provided with regular time with his line manager. However, the previous recommendation relating to providing the Registered Manager with copies of the records of these meetings has not been addressed.

Since the last inspection key workers have been directed to individually consider and risk assess the reasons for any restrictions on normal movement within the home. Behaviour support plans are being revised to ensure that a restriction required for one young person is not necessary and does not affect the service for another young person. Young people who no longer require additional environmental restrictions have positively moved to one of the different accommodation areas provided, thereby increasing their opportunities for developing greater independence.

Until recently the home has been known as 'a unit'. The team have recognised that this term does not appropriately represent the services provided to young people. As such, they are no longer using this phrase and are updating the home's documentation to reflect this. This is a positive cultural change; however, the internal accommodation is referred to as 'the east or west wing' and 'the east or west wing flat'. This is institutional style terminology and does not support the homely and inviting atmosphere the service seeks to provide.

Inspections by the independent visitor continue to occur every month. Records are reviewed and feedback is sought from families and the staff team. However, in the past four months only one visit has taken place outside of school time. This limits the opportunity for the visitor to observe direct care provided and for the views of young people to be sought and used.

The staff team continue to be committed to providing young people with positive experiences and the opportunity to develop during their stay in the home. Recent changes to the homes behaviour management approach complement this and have ensured that the use of physical intervention remains infrequent and only in order to safeguard young people.

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
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33 (2001)	ensure that the person carrying out Regulation 33 visits shall interview, with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, in order to form an opinion of the standard of care provided in the home. This relates to ensuring visits are consistently carried out at a time when young people are present in the home. (Regulation 33 (4)(a))	31/05/2014
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Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home provides a comfortable and homely environment. In particular, ensure that the terminology used to describe the internal accommodation does not lead to an institutional feel (NMS 10.3)
- ensure that a written or electronic record is kept by the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff, including the registered person. In particular, ensure that copies of the Registered Manager's supervisions are provided to him and a copy available in the home. (NMS 19.5)

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*.