

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC030439
Inspection date	11/02/2013
Inspector	Paula Lahey
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	08/08/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2013

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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 **good progress**.

At the full inspection in August 2012 the service was judged as good with two requirements and two recommendations raised. The motivated team has successfully addressed the requirements and recommendations and demonstrates continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for young people. A placing social worker agrees with this and describes the home as 'a flagship provision' for young people with disabilities. One recommendation has been raised as part of this inspection.

Improvements in formal consultation have positively influenced the monitoring and evaluation of the service. The Regulation 33 visitor now consistently visits the home outside of school times. As well as ensuring direct observation of the quality of care provided, this change in visiting time has resulted in young people now having regular opportunity to meet with the visitor to express their views.

A survey which formally seeks to consult those with parental responsibility has now been devised and sent out. Feedback is requested on the quality of care provided, examples of progress young people are making because of their stay, and

suggestions for development/improvements that parents would like to see implemented. At the time of inspection a small number of survey responses had been received. These provide positive and constructive feedback to managers about the strengths and areas for development. Areas identified as requiring direct action are being addressed at the monthly managers' quality and development meetings.

Since the last inspection the senior leadership team has reviewed and subsequently revised a number of structures and systems in order to develop the performance and accountability of the workforce. This includes clearer direction for shift planning and leading, improvements to evidencing and monitoring young people's progress, and implementation of a more focused staff supervision system.

Team leaders have been more directive in their role, providing the staff team with clear expectations and performance review. Detailed action plans are devised which support staff in the development and improvement of their role. Copies of supervision records are now provided to all staff, including the Registered Manager, following individual meetings. This ensures both parties are clear about areas discussed and agreed action plans. Young people benefit from a clearly directed and professionally supported staff team.

Young people are now provided with an improved permanent record of their stay in the home. Daily diaries are being used to capture evidence of young people's achievements as well as recording their individual support needs. Key workers ensure that each young person has clear and measurable goals for their development and now maintain a monthly record of progress towards them. Young people are now collating the many photographs of their involvement in activities and development within personalised albums and/or scrapbooks.

Individual risk assessment systems have been revised. Young people's support plans now clearly highlight any identified personal hazards and signpost to comprehensive action plans detailing management and control of the risk. There is a notable improvement in the quality of documented risk assessments since the last inspection. However, they currently focus on the individual needs of young people and not their potential effect/impact on each other. This is particularly important as the home provides for short break stays alongside longer-term placements. While staff have carefully considered these issues in practice, they have yet to evidence their actions and decisions in a documented format.

Communication with young people has improved. Each young person now has their own communication board with individualised symbols and signs. This has helped some young people to communicate their emotions, needs and opinions better and also helped others with sequencing and scheduling their stay. One young person is now regularly using symbol exchange and objects of reference to communicate with staff.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure that risk assessments carried out to identify any potential sources of harm to the children are recorded in writing and regularly reviewed. This relates specifically to documenting the assessment of the impact of individual needs of young people on the group dynamics. (NMS 10.8)

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*.