

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	20/02/2012
Inspector	Bill Drumm
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/11/2011
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home provides residential care for up to eight children and young people usually offering short breaks, but sometimes they can stay for a few weeks. Children and young people who use the home have either a physical disability or a learning disability. The local authority owns and operates this setting.

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 last inspection in November 2011, the overall effectiveness of the home was judged to be good.

The home has made good progress since the last inspection. Young people remain well cared for and safe. Two requirements and six recommendations were made at the last inspection. The two requirements and five of the recommendations have been met. One recommendation has been partially met.

One requirement made at the last inspection was to ensure that the independent visitor to the home interviewed, in private, the family members or relatives of young people using the service. The home's manager has redrafted the form used for recording such visits and has ensured that the independent visitor contacts the parents or carers of young people. This ensures the home is run properly, the correct information is recorded and the opinions of family members about the care young people receive are borne in mind.

The second requirement was for the home's manager to ensure that all staff working in the home, including those from an independent care agency, receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal. The home's manager has introduced a formal process for ensuring regular supervision of all staff, within the home, takes place at regular intervals. This helps to ensure that all staff receive consistent supervision and support and the care delivered to all young people within the home is adequately monitored.

Two recommendations were to ensure that each young person has a behaviour management plan in place and that risk assessments associated with their behaviour are kept up to date. The home's manager and staff have worked hard to ensure that these recommendations have been met. Each young person now has a comprehensive, easy to understand behaviour management plan in place, which includes risk assessments. Behaviour management plans and risk assessments show, within the limits of their abilities, the full involvement of young people. Furthermore, the documentation is regularly reviewed and kept up to date. This helps young people to fully understand the consequences of their behaviour and to develop their social skills.

Two further recommendations were made in relation to the placement of young people at the home and the care they receive while living there. The placement of young people at the home was not underpinned by an up-to-date assessment of the young person's needs and family circumstances. In addition, not every young person's care plan was regularly reviewed. The home's manager and staff have worked hard to ensure that this is no longer the case. Child appreciation meetings are now held prior to any new placement at the home being agreed. Core assessments of need are carried out by placing social workers prior to those meetings. This helps to ensure that the needs of the young person and their family circumstances are fully understood before a placement at the home is agreed. In addition, each young person's care plan has been fully redrafted. Care plans are child-friendly, written in plain English and record the input of the young people themselves. Young people understand why they live at the home and what a placement there is meant to achieve.

The home's manager was also asked to ensure that the home's Statement of Purpose was reviewed to ensure it accurately recorded the contact details of the current regulatory authority. This has taken place. Members of staff, parents and young people know who they can contact if they are unhappy about anything in the home.

One final recommendation was made in relation to those young people who are nearing adulthood. The recommendation was to ensure that those young people who are eligible for a comprehensive transition plan have one in place. Transition plans help to identify what services young people may need once they leave the home and who is responsible for meeting their needs. Transition plans for all young people nearing adulthood were not in place. This means that the young person may not receive the services and help they need to support them in the community.

In addition to the above, the home is making further improvements that enhance the quality of care provided to young people. The home's manager has developed a working relationship with other providers of short-break services in her area. This helps to promote good practice and the sharing of new ideas. The home has also invited members of the local youth council to audit its services and to talk with the young people who use the service. This has helped to improve the service offered to young people.

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 each young person who is eligible, has a detailed and comprehensive transition plan in place. (NMS 12.4)

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)*.