

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	28/02/2013
Inspector	David Putnam
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	25/10/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This is a local authority service. It provides short breaks for up to four children who have learning and/or physical disabilities.

The children's respite service shares the building with a similar service for adults. The services are kept separate by locked doors, but some facilities are shared. One manager is registered for both children's and adults' services. Staff also work across both provisions. The adult service is inspected separately by the Care Quality Commission.

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 this short breaks unit was judged as adequate overall. Five requirements were made to promote improvement. These have all been addressed and bring about improvements that directly benefit children and young people.

A children's guide is now produced explaining the service in simple terms using words and picture symbols which are familiar to children and young people. Furthermore, the service previously produced a DVD which is still available. This helps children and young people to understand the services on offer. Visual information is augmented by clear and concise verbal communication, which is supported by onscreen signing.

All staff now receive regular supervision in line with the expectation set out in the

home's Statement of Purpose. Contemporaneous handwritten notes of supervision meetings provide a good summary of discussion and identify clear decisions and actions to be taken. This helps to monitor individual progress and highlight training and development needs for staff. Links to the appraisal process are made clearly.

Notifications of significant events are now made in a timely manner. Records relating to these events are comprehensive and show good management of complex situations. This demonstrates that communication with external agencies is good. In addition Ofsted, as the regulatory body, is now consistently informed in a way that enables the service to be monitored effectively.

Regular reviews of the quality of care are now undertaken by the Registered Manager. Since the last inspection, all matters listed in the regulations are monitored and reported upon. This helps to maintain the focus of leaders and managers on improving the quality of the service to children and young people. Patterns or changes are identified and addressed. Consultation with stakeholders also brings about improvements. For example, parents now receive more detailed information about what activities children and young people have undertaken during their short breaks.

After a significant delay formal notification of the change of registered individual for this service was received prior to this inspection. In addition the Registered Manager has notified Ofsted that she will be resigning her post on 31 March 2013. This ensures that records held by Ofsted are up to date.

In addition, three recommendations for improvement were made at the last inspection. These have also been fully addressed. Children and young people now benefit from significantly more activities in the wider community. More than two activities outside the home now take place each week. Previously only one such activity was happening every two-and-a-half weeks. A change in the size of minibus used by the service has also brought about improvement in opportunities to go out of the unit. This is because three times as many staff are now able to drive the bus.

A development plan for the service is now in place. This incorporates the prospect of significant strategic investment in the service to the benefit of children and young people. This document is kept live through regular discussion between the registered individual and the Registered Manager in supervision meetings. Information is cascaded down to staff through team meetings to ensure they understand their responsibilities in meeting the plan's objectives.

Since the last inspection 11 care staff have signed up to complete the Children and Young People's Workforce level 3 qualifications in line with national minimum standards. This enhances the knowledge and understanding of staff and augments the adult social care qualifications most of them already hold.

Leaders and managers have taken robust action taken to address shortfalls identified at the last inspection. This demonstrates a continued commitment to improve the quality of care and outcomes for children and young people.

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*.