

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	07/01/2013
Inspector	Pete Hylton
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	25/09/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The provider organisation is a registered charity and is a major provider of services for adults and children with learning disabilities and mental health issues.

This home provides respite care for more than 40 children and young people with learning and physical difficulties, and often complex health care needs, accommodating a maximum of four at any one time.

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 **inadequate progress**.

This home was last inspected in September 2012 and was judged to be adequate. Five requirements and two recommendations were made.

There have been no restraints since the last inspection. However, some members of staff are still not trained in the safe use of physical restraint. No training has taken place since the last inspection and the acting manager was unable to show any evidence of planned training dates to the inspector. As a result, young people continue to be cared for by staff that may not be appropriately skilled in managing incidents of challenging behaviour. Although this shortfall has not negatively impacted on young people, there remains the potential for young people to be at risk if they display unsafe or challenging behaviour. Therefore, the requirement from the last inspection has not been met. As a result of this shortfall, the home has been judged to be making inadequate progress.

The home's Statement of Purpose is now fully updated with all the required information. The experience and qualifications of the staff team have been added to this document. This enables young people, parents and placing services to feel reassured that staff members working at the home are suitably experienced and qualified.

Safeguarding procedures have also improved since the last inspection. Detailed safeguarding procedures ensure that all staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities with regards to keeping young people safe. The requirements relating to the Statement of Purpose and the home's safeguarding procedures have been met.

Young people, parents and the placing services are encouraged to voice their concerns, worries or complaints. The acting manager ensures that complaints are taken seriously and are swiftly acted upon. There has been one complaint since the last inspection. This complaint was sensitively and promptly resolved by the acting manager. A detailed and clear written record was made, including responses to the complainant and a recording of the outcome. This means that the system used for managing complaints has improved and the requirement made at the last inspection has been fully addressed.

There have been no serious incidents requiring notification to Ofsted since the last inspection. The acting manager has improved the system for notifying relevant bodies where serious events occur in the home. All staff are clear on the processes to be followed and an electronic monitoring system ensures that the acting manager is able to check that key tasks have been completed. This ensures that serious incidents, should they occur, are more robustly managed. The requirement has therefore been fully met.

Young people's safety has improved since the last inspection. Fire drills are now regularly completed and take place in evening times. This ensures that young people are fully practised in safe evacuation and know how to respond in the event of fire. The young person's guide to the home now contains the contact details for the Children's Rights Director and Ofsted. This further contributes to young people's safety as they can contact relevant services if they are worried or concerned. The two recommendations made at the last inspection have therefore been fully addressed.

An enthusiastic, caring and motivated staff team ensure that the needs and wishes of young people are at the forefront of their practice. Young people know that their choices and preferences are respected and valued. For example, where young people show an interest in cooking, the staff team provide structured activities and ensure that all young people, irrespective of their disability, are able to take part. This results in an enabling environment where young people are able to access and enjoy a wide range of activities.

Incidents of challenging behaviour are rare at the home. When they do occur, they

are appropriately and sensitively managed. Detailed incident records ensure that families, placing services and the staff team are made aware of any incidents in the home. However, there has been one occasion since the last inspection where an incident was erroneously recorded. The acting manager's own quality checking did not identify this error so a recommendation has been made to improve this area of practice. The outcomes for young people are not affected as a result of this shortfall.

Short stays are carefully planned by the staff team. This ensures that young people enjoy staying with peers who have similar interests. As a result, young people form and sustain appropriate peer relationships. Relationships between staff and young people are positive and young people enjoy staying at the home.

Regular communication between key care staff, young people's families and the placing service ensure that all relevant information is shared and acted upon. A parent commented that they enjoy, 'Excellent communication' with the staff and have, 'Regular meetings to review progress.' This results in detailed care plans that enable the staff team to provide individualised care to young people. As a result, young people benefit from continuity and familiarity in their individual routines. This ensures that young people feel settled when they stay at the home.

The acting manager has made some improvements to the home since the last inspection. Some areas of the home have been redecorated and there are plans to further develop the service. The acting manager has also applied for registration with Ofsted and has completed all necessary steps in this process. Relationships with young people's families remain a key strength. The service continues to offer parents a flexible and supportive service. A parent commented that the home has been, 'Incredibly flexible at meeting our changing needs' and that they 'Can't speak highly enough of the home.'

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
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate training. (Regulation 27(4)(a))	15/02/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the manager regularly monitors, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the home's policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Also ensure immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring. (NMS 21.2)

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*.