

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC032439
Inspection date	10/02/2014
Inspector	Jennifer Reed
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	21/06/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This service offers short breaks for up to eight children at any one time, for young people of either gender who have a severe learning and physical disability and/or complex health needs. This service is provided by a local authority and is available to families from across the county.

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**.

The last inspection of this children's home was undertaken on 21 June 2013 and its overall effectiveness was judged to be adequate. The home has satisfactorily addressed the four requirements and eight of the nine recommendations made for improvement raised at the previous inspection. However, a further four requirements and four recommendations have been made at this inspection, to continue to raise the standard of service delivery in accordance with regulations and standards.

Leaders and managers have worked hard to address the shortfalls identified at the full inspection of the service and this has led to improved outcomes for children and their families.

The home has put effective systems in place to ensure that reviews of placement and short break plans and the results of statutory reviews are now promptly recorded on children's files. Furthermore, multi-agency consideration is given to children's individual behavioural needs and clear behaviour management strategies

are devised for each child and kept on their file. This up-to-date information guides staff in how best to care for the children in residence, and contributes to promoting their welfare and their protection.

Managers within the service have employed a diligent and focussed approach to improving risk assessment processes within the home, to minimise the likelihood of possible harm to children. There is significant improvement in the quality of generic and individual children's risk assessments for activities, both on and off site. Also the formulation of excellent personal emergency evacuation plans and procedures contribute to the provision of effective protection for children. The hot water boiler within one kitchen has been removed to eliminate this possible hazard.

Staff now benefit from more regular supervision to support them in looking after children well. The quality and duration of each supervision session is more rigorously monitored by managers, to ensure staff receive the support and guidance they require to meet children's individual needs and promote positive outcomes. Newly appointed staff promptly commence undertaking the home's induction standards which have been developed within the local authority. However, it is not evident that ratification of this learning programme has been gained to demonstrate its equivalence to the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards, to ensure this provides an adequate level of training for staff.

The home now provides children with information about the operation of the home within the children's guide in symbol format. This improves some children's accessibility to information. However, the new format does not include all of the required contact numbers for children to call, should they wish to raise a concern with someone outside of the home. Furthermore, a copy of the children's guide has not been sent to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI).

The home's Statement of Purpose was revised in January 2014 to provide information to parents and stakeholders about the running of the home. However, a copy of this amended document has not been sent to HMCI as is required.

Managers have revised the home's recording of restraints to include the two identified omissions highlighted at the previous inspection. Managers have consulted with other professionals in their efforts to provide an exemplary recording format. However, the new format now does not contain some previously included information that is required to be reported upon by regulation. The new format does not enable staff to adequately report upon injuries suffered and does not provide sufficient details about the restraint undertaken to enable effective monitoring to safeguard children. There has also been delay in transposing information between documents recording restraints undertaken within the home in recent months, and not all entries provide full details of each restraint. The numbers of restraints undertaken, identified in the regulatory monthly visitors reports for November and December 2013, do not accurately reflect the number of entries recorded within the home's dedicated record.

The manager regularly completes a monthly monitoring of practice report and

identifies the new developments put in place to improve the standard of care provided to children. However, the completed review reports do not clearly show how monitoring processes identify trends and issues of concern, resulting in recommendations being made for improvement in practice.

Safeguarding practices within the home have been improved by the development and implementation of the 'Bumps and Concerns' record. This record provides staff with a mechanism to record observations of behaviour and children's minor injuries and contributes to increasing their protection.

The home has taken robust steps to improve parents and children's participation in sharing their views about the quality of care and the running of the home. A symbol format has been devised to help children share their experience of any restraint; this increases safeguarding measures within the home. The home now holds very regular meetings with children where they can have their say and have opportunity to influence the development of the home. Children enjoy coming to stay in the home and they feel safe. Parental feedback is sought; parents express positive views about the progress their children are making and the standard of care and activities provided.

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
4 (2001)	supply a copy of the children's guide to the HMCI (Regulation 4 (5))	31/03/2014
5 (2001)	notify the HMCI of any revision of the Statement of Purpose within 28 days (Regulation 5(b))	31/03/2014
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose and includes all points raised in this regulation (Regulation 17B (3) (a - i))	31/03/2014
34 (2001)	provide within the system in place for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6, for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34 (3))	31/03/2014

Recommendations

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

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- ensure the children's guide includes how they can find out their rights, how a child can contact their Independent Reviewing Officer, the Children's Rights Director, Ofsted if they wish to raise a concern with inspectors (NMS 13.5)
 - ensure there is a good quality learning and development programme for induction which enhances individual skills and keeps staff up-to-date with professional and legal developments; in particular, verify that the home's 'in-house' induction programme is equivalent to the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards (NMS 18.1)
 - ensure that visits of the home under Regulation 33 include checks of any disciplinary measures and use of restraint; in particular, ensure that reporting accurately reflects the number of incidents of restraint recorded (NMS 21.7)
 - review the quality of the system in place to monitor the matters set out in Schedule 6 to enable the provider to identify any trends and issues of concern so that all those involved in running and working in the home can continually improve the quality of care they are providing. (CA1989, Volume 5: statutory guidance 3.14)

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*.