

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035247
Inspection date	16/12/2011
Inspector	Stephen Graham
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	14/09/2011
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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)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This local authority children's home provides short-break care and accommodation for seven children with learning and physical disabilities, from nine years up to 17 years old.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **good** progress.

The home is currently judged as good. Since the last inspection, the manager and staff team have worked effectively to further improve the service. All of the three actions set during the last inspection and two of the three recommendations made, have been implemented in full. One recommendation is not yet fully met and is, therefore, re-stated in this report. One new action and one new recommendation are also made.

The home has a Statement of Purpose which describes clearly the criteria for admission to the service. The manager and staff team have worked to ensure that the admission criteria are applied clearly with each young person coming to stay at the home. The staff team maintain very positive relationships with young people and their carers. There is detailed guidance for staff to follow regarding the use of agreed sanctions. They now ensure that the record of any sanctions applied includes all of the information required.

There are regular monitoring visits to the home, completed on behalf of the registered provider. Reports from these visits have been improved and now report on each of the matters required. However, these visits do not always take place each month as required. The manager has good systems in place to consult with young people and their carers, to monitor the home's records, and to create monthly reports regarding the quality of the service provided to young people. The manager uses these systems very effectively to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the home and to further improve the service. However, copies of these monitoring reports are not currently provided for information to Ofsted as recommended. The manager and staff team also use a range of surveys, newsletters and meetings to consult with young people, their parents, carers and placing social workers. This helps ensure that the wishes and feelings of young people and all those involved in their care are taken into consideration in the day-to-day running of the home.

The arrangements to complete checks on the safety equipment, used to help protect young people, have been improved. These checks are now completed regularly as required. There are arrangements in place to complete checks on any new staff team members to ensure they are suitable to work with children. The manager works closely with recruitment personnel to confirm that checks have been completed

thoroughly. However, a clear written record of this is not currently maintained within the home itself. Young people and their carers receive their own guide to the service. It is presented to a very high standard and contains very good information about the home and informs young people who they should speak to if they need any further advice. The current version has been further improved. It now describes clearly to young people how they can contact their own independent reviewing officer should they wish to.

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
33 (2001)	ensure that visits made to the home on behalf of the registered provider take place at least once a month. (Regulation 33(3))	31/01/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the records of the checks carried out on any new staff are completed in sufficient detail (NMS 16.2)
- provide Ofsted with a copy of each monitoring report completed by the manager. (NMS 21.2) (Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 5: Children's Homes 3.14)