

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	28/03/2014
Inspector	Chris Scully
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	27/06/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This service provides short-term breaks for eight young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, physical disabilities and learning disabilities. In addition, one child is able to live at the home. The home is owned and managed by the local authority.

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 full inspection in June 2013 the overall effectiveness of this children's home was judged as good. Some shortfalls were found in relation to notifications to Ofsted, staff training, health care passports and records of self-harm, internet access, garden areas and the disciplinary procedures.

The children's home is making good progress. Young people are making progress in many aspects of their lives and staff continue to provide a high quality of care that promotes young people's development and safety. The Registered Manager has met most of the actions from the last inspection. However, she has not yet been able to secure internet access for the young people. She has worked tirelessly since the last inspection to try and achieve this goal and remains in close contact with the local authority as to how this can be achieved in order to further improve the educational and personal outcomes for young people.

Clear procedures which are effectively implemented are in place to ensure Ofsted is notified of any significant incidents or events affecting young people the home or

staff. The Registered Manager has introduced detailed audits to monitor the quality of record keeping, staff files and training. She has clarified the disciplinary reporting systems with regards to contacting senior managers out of office hours. This means staff have a clear process to follow should they need to contact a senior manager to report any concerns.

Staff place the welfare of individual young people at the centre of their practice. They are reflective, resourceful and creative in finding ways to support young people, regardless of the challenges young people and their circumstances may present. A number of staff have received training which enables them to support or facilitate contact between young people and their families. Consequently, young people are able to enjoy their contact visits in a safe and well supported environment.

There has been a significant improvement in the quality of the written records. The manager has developed an effective system for monitoring the standard of recording and making necessary improvements. For example, initiating anaphylactic shock protocols and including more detailed information within young people health care passports. This means health passports clearly identify the full range of young people's needs, circumstances, and how their needs are being met.

This is also evident in the record of incidents of self-harm and the action taken by staff to support young people during this time. However, there is limited information with regards to the administration of any first aid to young people in relation to these incidents. The Registered Manager has recently completed an overhaul of young people and staff files to provide a clearer, more effective recording system.

The manager provides clear and effective leadership. She places a strong emphasis on meeting young people's needs and promoting their welfare. She is a supportive manager, but also challenges staff and herself to reflect on what they do and think about ways to improve the quality of care and outcomes for young people. Ultimately she has a clear understanding of the strengths of the service and areas for future development.

Young people stay in a warm, welcoming homely environment which is specifically designed to meet their individual and complex needs. The home has recently purchased a specialised bed for a young person which means they are able to enjoy a peaceful night's sleep while staying there. Communal areas are light and bright and meet their diverse needs of each young person.

The garden areas have been developed with the introduction of wind chimes, solar lights and other sensory equipment. The fences had been painted with a mural of the children and staff. The Registered Manager explained that due to the recent bad weather a number of these items will need to be replaced. The home has recently raised the height of the fencing around the garden areas and a number of trees and shrubs were cut down. As a result the iron support bars are now visible and accessible to young people and pose a tripping hazard to young people.

Young people receive high quality support from caring and competent staff. Staff

place young people firmly at the centre of what they do. They are fully committed to promoting young people's welfare, even in challenging situations. Young people have good relationships with staff. Young people excitedly tell visitors that they are going to the pictures tonight with their friend and that they will be having popcorn. Parents say their children enjoy coming here and that they are happy and settled here.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure children have access to a range of education resources to support their learning beyond the school day in particular access to the internet (NMS 8.2)
- ensure avoidable hazards are removed in line with a domestic setting, in particular the exposed fence supports and tree stumps in the garden area (NMS 10.3)
- ensure there is a written record of all treatment and first aid given to young people during their stay in particular following incidents of self-harm. (NMS 6.15)

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*.