

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	27/03/2014
Inspector	Chris Scully
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	12/09/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home provides short-term breaks and some respite care for children and young people with physical and learning disabilities who are aged from 7 years to 17 years.

The home is owned and run 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**.

The overall effectiveness of this children's home was judged as good at the full inspection in September 2013. Some areas for improvement were identified pertaining to staff records, monitoring of the home, health care plans and qualifications of staff.

The children's home is making good progress. Young people continue to live in a safe and supportive environment where they receive a good quality of care. It is effectively and efficiently managed and shows a good capacity for improvement. The majority of the recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed. The home has updated staff files to ensure all of the required information, such as their personal information, qualifications and hours of employment, are recorded. All staff now hold or are in the process of obtaining a level 3 childcare qualification.

Monitoring of the home by the independent person has improved. This is because parents and carers are now spoken to as part of the monitoring process and their views are used to help make judgments about how well the home is performing.

Monitoring by the Registered Manager takes place on a monthly basis. However, the manager's monitoring reports are not detailed or evaluative enough to provide an accurate picture of the quality of care, the strengths and the areas for development or the difference that the home is making to young people's lives in achieving better outcomes. Also, the home has not sent in copies of the Registered Manager's monitoring reports to Ofsted, This means Ofsted is unable to identify any trends or issues of concern to help drive forward improvements. This was an oversight by the Registered Manager and does not impact upon the care provided to young people.

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. Staff are committed to helping young people with complex needs overcome any difficulties they are experiencing to lead active and fulfilled lives.

Young people are engaged in an extensive range of activities which are carefully geared to their specific needs and interests. For example, bringing in a range of animals for young people to handle including a snake, a tortoise, a bearded dragon and a skunk, which one young person said 'look it's a badger.' Staff are skilled at adapting activities so that all young people are included, for example by placing gloves on a young person they were able to handle the animals without causing an allergic reaction.

The recording and documentation have improved and provide clear insight into young people's time at the home. Young people's health care needs are improved by the introduction of new health care plans which effectively outline their individual and complex needs. Staff are fully conversant with each young person's needs which means their needs are consistently well met in practice. This home has improved on the safety and well-being of young people by ensuring that the missing from care risk assessments are more detailed. This means valuable information is readily available to staff and police in the event of a young person going missing.

Staff give young people's safety the highest priority. They consistently apply safe caring practices to reduce the risks to young people's safety. They know exactly what they need to do when they have concerns about young people and take decisive action to protect young people. The home is well maintained although there are some loose fitting carpet tiles in the play room which pose a tripping hazard. Young people's bedrooms are designed to enable them to enjoy a relaxed and safe stay at the home.

The Registered Manager has consulted young people about their overnight stays and who they would like to be with. He is now in the process of reorganising some stays so that young people are able to stay with their friends and enjoy a 'sleep over' with them.

Young people are at the very heart of everything the home does. The Registered Manager and staff are committed to ensuring young people have a voice and are listened to. The redesigning of young people's comments sheets means they are

more able to make their views known, including what they like about the home and what, if anything, they would like to change. Young people make choices using various communication systems, such as picture boards, about every aspect of their stay. This includes what they want to eat, what they would like to do and who they want to be with. This means young people are able to get the most out of their stay and have a fun and enjoyable time with their friends.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure copies of Regulation 34 reports forwarded to Ofsted on a six monthly basis clearly identify any trends and issues of concern in order to improve the quality of care provided. (Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations, Volume 5: Children's Homes, paragraph 3.14)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained, this relates to the carpet squares in the play room that have become loose (NMS10.3)
- ensure there are clear and effective procedures for monitoring the activities of the home, in particular the Registered Manager needs to ensure that his monitoring reports are evaluative and record any identified shortfalls. (NMS 21.1)

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*.