

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	01/02/2012
Inspector	Susan Mullin
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	25/08/2011
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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

The home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a borough council.

Progress

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

At the last inspection in August 2011, the overall quality rating for the service was outstanding. One requirement relating to signing off any medication administered to a young person has been met.

The children's home has maintained quality of care and the outcomes for young people remain outstanding. This has been achieved through continuing high quality, skilled, coordinated care from a stable and well qualified staff group. However, there has been a recent and prolonged staff restructure of the home, which has impacted on the usual highly proficient management and deployment of the staff team and has the potential to impact on the outcomes for young people. For example, a new member of staff was allowed to administer medication to young people without undertaking the appropriate medication administration training. Additionally, this new member of staff had not taken part in a routine fire drill and was unsure of what action to take in the event of a fire alarm. Furthermore, not all sporting activities have been fully risk assessed, for example, swimming unsupervised and this does not fully protect young people from harm.

Whilst there are computers available in the home, the programmes accessible by young people do not have the facility to upload up-to-date educational information. This limits the educational input young people might otherwise use to help them achieve and grow in confidence and self-esteem. Young people currently in placement receive care from a competent and well trained group of staff. However, this training does not include information on Autism and Aspergers syndrome, which may impact on the staff groups understanding of these conditions. The home has a full set of policies and procedures in place, however, not all staff have been made aware of the lone working arrangements of the setting. This may impact on the suitability of new members of staff escorting young people outside of the home.

Three requirements and three recommendations have been raised as a result of this inspection.

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
21 (2001)	ensure that suitable arrangements are made for the recording, handling, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of any medicines received into the children's home (Regulation 21(1))	22/02/2012
23 (2001)	ensure all activities in which children participate are fully risk assessed for actual and potential, situations that could occur; these must be clearly documented and reviewed at appropriate intervals (Regulation 23 (b))	22/02/2012
32 (2001)	ensure, by means of fire drills and practises at suitable intervals, that the persons working at the home and the children accommodated there, are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire. (Regulation 32 (1) (e))	22/02/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all staff's work is consistent with the home's policies and procedures. In particular the lone working arrangements (NMS 21.3)
- ensure staff are equipped to meet the needs of the children accommodated, in particular training on Autism (NMS 18.1)
- ensure young people have access to a range of educational resources to support their learning and have opportunities beyond the school day to engage in activities which promote learning. (NMS 8.2)