

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC037588
Inspection date	27/03/2012
Inspector	David Coulter
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	08/08/2011
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2012

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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 home is registered for a maximum of six young people between the ages of five and under 18 years. It is owned by a city council and provides short-term placements for young people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities.

Progress

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

The home has responded positively to the recommendation arising from the last inspection and has been subject to a significant refurbishment programme that has seen the creation of a number of specially equipped bedrooms and a new lounge/recreation area. New double-glazed windows are being installed and existing ground-floor facilities are being redecorated. Although the work has still to be completed, it has already had a positive impact on the both the home's environment for the young people and the morale of staff. While the building work necessitated the closure of the home for a two-week period, staff were able to support a number of young people and their families by undertaking community-based activities.

Young people are appropriately supported during their respite visits. Staff employ a range of communication techniques to involve each young person in decision making within the home and they are encouraged to exercise choice over such things as food and activities. During their visits young people are encouraged to participate in a range of social and recreational activities that are appropriate to their age and understanding. Although staff still undertake activities in the local community, the lack of a minibus is currently curtailing group outings.

During their visits the health and well-being of each young person are carefully monitored and any concerns passed on to appropriate parties. Staff have completed training on caring for young people with specific medical conditions such as epilepsy. A robust system ensures that medication is both booked in and dispensed appropriately.

The home operates with a team of enthusiastic staff who are led by an experienced manager. There is a culture of training and professional development within the home and an understanding that staff will regularly update their knowledge and skills in response to the changing needs of young people. For example, staff have responded to the increase in young people being referred to the home with autistic spectrum disorders by undertaking a specific training programme. Although each staff member should receive a regular individual professional supervision session, due to two unfilled senior staff posts, the intervals between supervision sessions have increased. The manager has attempted to address this problem by organising group sessions that focus on practice issues, however, he acknowledges a more

sustainable long-term solution needs to be sought.

Staff spoke in positive terms about working in the home and are clearly appreciative of the improvements to the environment. They are keen to further develop the service they offer and feel their 'child-focused' approach places them in a unique position to contribute to each young person's core assessment. Staff have established good working relationships with parents and continue to liaise effectively with staff from other agencies such as social workers, teaching staff and health professionals.

Although evidence indicates the home is making good progress, two recommendations are being made to further improve existing provision.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- provide suitable transport to enable young people to participate in a range of activities, including leisure activities and trips (NMS 7.2).
- ensure staff have are provided with regular supervision by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. (NMS 19.4)