

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	13/02/2014
Inspector	Catherine Honey
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	12/07/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home provides residential care for seven young people with learning difficulties. It 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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the home's previous inspection in July 2013, the home's overall effectiveness was judged as adequate with good outcomes for children and young people, and good quality of care. Four requirements and three recommendations were made which have been addressed. No regulatory shortfalls were identified at this inspection. The judgement of satisfactory progress reflects the balance between the good progress some young people have achieved since the last inspection, and the deterioration in outcomes for others.

Consultation and communication with parents has improved. For example, staff members have supported families to have more valuable time with their children by suggesting different venues for contact visits. This promotes young people's well-being. The Registered Manager's internal monitoring of the quality of care in the home now includes a better overview of consultation with young people, parents and the placing authority. Reports submitted to HMCI, Ofsted show the impact of this consultation. In addition, a revised copy of the homes' statement of purpose has been submitted to HMCI, Ofsted. These measures mean the regulator has a better overview of activities in the home.

At the previous inspection, a shortfall was found in the use of household insecticide

within the home. The use of this substance has now been assessed for risk and there guidance is available for its proper use. These health and safety measures help ensure the home is a safe environment for young people to live in. Care planning documents are comprehensive and are kept up-to-date. This means staff can access a clear plan for young people's care which demonstrates any recent changes. The young people's guide now clearly shows how to access an independent advocate. Staff are able to demonstrate a clear understanding of the home's whistleblowing policy. This demonstrates improvements to the arrangements the home has to help keep young people safe.

Some young people continue to make very good progress while living at the home. They have made significant developments in their independence skills. For example, young people who needed a very high level of staff support to walk to school are now able to go to school accompanied by one member of staff instead of two. This is a huge achievement in terms of young people's independence, personal development and dignity. Young people use very positive terms when describing the home, and are relaxed and at ease when in the presence of staff. This demonstrates strong relationships between young people and staff. One young person stated, 'this is the best home ever.'

For some young people, levels of disruptive behaviour, rates of going missing from home and risk-taking behaviour have increased. This shows some deterioration in outcomes for these young people. Staff work tirelessly with young people to educate them on the associated dangers and risks of these behaviours, and the home works closely with outside agencies, such as child and adolescent mental health services. This means young people are provided with expert guidance to help them further understand the impact of their behaviour. When young people go missing, there are highly efficient arrangements and protocols in place with the local police who work with staff to return young people safely to the home. Episodes of disruptive behaviour have begun to impact on other young people living in the home, who are showing signs of being unsettled. The Registered Manager and placing authority have recognised this impact and have taken steps to resolve the situation. A social worker stated, 'staff commitment to my young person has been exceptional.'

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*.