

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	29/02/2012
Inspector	Tracy Murty
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	06/12/2011
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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

This children's home provides residential care for seven young people with learning difficulties. It is owned and managed by the local authority.

Progress

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

At the last full inspection of this home in December 2011, the overall effectiveness judgement was outstanding. One requirement and one recommendation were made as a result of that inspection. The home has demonstrated continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for young people. The home has fully addressed the requirement and recommendation made at the last inspection.

Young people continue to receive an excellent standard of care. The staff team is dedicated to the needs of each young person and is focused on improving outcomes and the quality of care. Young people attend suitable educational provision on a daily basis. Staff work closely with education providers to ensure consistency of care for young people. Daily handover meetings take place in the home, where detailed information is shared about the progress made by each young person. One young person stated that they liked their school and presented as happy on returning from school at the end of the day.

Young people enjoy a wide range of leisure activities, supported by a dedicated staff team. Young people have been on holidays abroad; they attend local youth clubs, theme parks and take part in a host of other activities. Staff ensure that photographs are taken of such events, to provide young people with a record of their achievements and their time in the home. Staff took two young people to visit the country where they were born and where they had lived for many years. Photograph albums and diaries were completed from this trip. The young people clearly take great pride and enjoyment from these mementos and show these to visitors with great excitement.

The home employs a chef to prepare all meals for young people. Meals are varied and healthy, reflecting the diverse needs of the young people living in the home. Young people are encouraged to eat a healthy diet, with lots of fresh fruit and vegetables being included in the meal plans. Weekly meetings with young people provide opportunities for them to discuss their food likes and dislikes with staff. Young people are also encouraged to prepare simple meals and drinks with staff support and supervision. On occasions they also go shopping with staff to buy the weekly groceries. Young people's weight is monitored routinely and checked by staff; exercise and activities are provided to ensure a healthy lifestyle is maintained and promoted.

The staff team receives a range of training relevant to their needs, overseen by the home's manager. One member of staff reported that they were very impressed with the quality of the induction they received when they started working at this home. Staff receive regular supervision and report that they feel happy and supported by both the home's manager and other staff. However, the central recording of training is not up to date and this is highlighted in the recommendation made as a result of this inspection. The Statement of Purpose does not refer to the arrangements for the supervision, training and development of employees, which has been included in a requirement made at this inspection.

The use of restraint with young people is minimal. When restraints are undertaken, a record is made promptly and in detail. The records include the antecedents leading up to the use of a restraint technique, clear details of the restraint used and comments from young people. The home's manager has now implemented a clearer system for the recording of restraints on a young person's case file. Records are clear and helpful to both staff and young people.

Planned fire evacuations take place every month in the home. These ensure that both staff and young people are prepared for any unplanned or emergency situations. Evacuations take place at varying times of the day and night and involve all young people and staff on duty. Records of evacuations state the date and numbers of staff and young people involved. These do not state the time of the evacuation or specific details of staff and young people involved. This is highlighted in the recommendation made as a result of this inspection, to ensure that consideration is given to more detailed records being kept by the home's manager for monitoring purposes.

The home has not had any formal complaints made for a considerable period of time. There is a complaints procedure available to all staff on-line and a file for the recording of any complaints and commendations received by the home. Young people are made aware of the complaints procedure on admission to the home. There is also a 'moans and groans' book for young people to record any less serious issues for discussion with staff. The complaints and commendations file does not have clear or detailed records of complaints received or how they were dealt with previously. This is highlighted in the recommendation made as a result of this inspection, to ensure that consideration is given to more detailed and clearer records being kept by the home's manager.

The home's manager and senior staff members undertake detailed monitoring and reviews of the care provided each month. Reports are produced and consider any recommendations made by the independent visitor from their reports. Staff take on specific areas for consideration each month, alongside the home's manager. Regular senior staff member meetings further consider these reports and identify action needing to be taken and by whom. However, not all of the matters set out in the regulations are covered in the reports. In addition, the home has not provided Ofsted with copies of their management reports to date. A requirement has been made to address these shortfalls.

The home has a detailed Statement of Purpose in place. The children's guide is currently being updated to make it more accessible to young people. However, the Statement of Purpose has some inaccuracies in relation to staffing details and does not provide specific information required in certain other areas, including child protection and bullying. The home clearly ensures that young people are kept safe and has a clear policy in relation to bullying. The home takes appropriate and prompt action in relation to any actual or potential safeguarding or bullying issues. The omission in the Statement of Purpose does not impact on quality of care or outcomes for young people. A requirement has been made to ensure that the home's manager includes the required information into the home's Statement of Purpose..

The Statement of Purpose does not refer to the missing from care procedure. There have been no young people reported as missing since the last inspection of the home. The home has a clear joint protocol with the police and local authority for dealing with such situations. The high staffing levels ensure that young people are supervised at all times and internal security of the home further ensures that young people are not able to leave the property without staff supervision. The omission of the information relating to the missing from care procedure in the Statement of Purpose has been included in a requirement made at this inspection.

The home is decorated and furnished to a high standard. Young people have their own bedrooms with en-suite bathroom facilities. Rooms are highly personalised and include such items as photographs and copies of certificates and awards received. Young people present as very happy, settled and receive excellent levels of care and attention from the staff team. The staff team demonstrate a detailed understanding of each young person and a total commitment to ensuring that their holistic needs are met.

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
34 (2001)	ensure that all matters set out in Schedule 6 are monitored at appropriate intervals and that copies of reports produced are supplied to Ofsted twice per year (Regulation 34(1)(a)(2))	27/04/2012
4 (2001)	ensure that the Statement of Purpose includes accurate information about the home's Manager, arrangements for child protection, bullying, missing from care and arrangements for the supervision, training and development of employees. (Regulation 4(1))	27/04/2012

Recommendations

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

- ensure regular monitoring of all records kept to ensure compliance with the home's policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Take immediate action to address any issues raised by this monitoring. This is with particular reference to recording of all planned evacuations, complaints and staff training central records and logs. (NMS 21.2)