

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	25/02/2014
Inspector	Rosemary Chapman
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	30/05/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home, which is managed by a local authority, provides care and accommodation for up to seven young people with a learning and/or physical disability.

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 last inspection in May 2013 judged that the service was good overall. Six recommendations to improve practice were made at that time. These related to: increasing the involvement of young people in developing the home; health, medication and daily support issues; internal monitoring; and staff training. This inspection judges that the home has made good progress since that time. It has fully addressed the six recommendations, resulting in improved outcomes for the children and young people who live at this home.

The home has made significant progress in demonstrating how children and young people are more fully involved in both how their care and support are delivered and how their views influence the development of the home. This has been an evolving process, demonstrating that the manager and staff reflect, evaluate and continue to improve on their practice and systems. Staff now comment about each child's wishes and views on every shift. In addition, a member of staff analyses all the feedback to identify recurring themes which are then discussed at team meetings. As a result, children have a much better participation in the home, and their opinions are communicated, heard and acted upon.

Systems have been improved to ensure that any appointments are not missed and that medication is always given as prescribed. Shift planning and recording have been improved so that any tasks are identified in the shift plan and allocated at the start of the shift. Likewise, daily recording has been improved with regards to medication. At the end of each shift there is a daily recording about each child, which is personalised to their needs. This encompasses medication as well as targets and behaviour. These developments ensure that children's needs are well monitored and their health is fully promoted as a result.

The recording of how a child's care plan is to be implemented has also been developed to make it more accessible. The comprehensive care plan underpins more focused documents which relate to safety, behaviour management and what is important to the young person. This means that significant information about the day-to-day care and support of a young person is easier to find and implement. Consequently young people make progress as staff are fully aware of any changes in behaviour and seek advice and guidance from other professionals where necessary.

Staff training has been developed, including courses on moving and handling, autism, medication, safer recruitment, and supervision and appraisal. Staff comment that their training needs are assessed and met and that they are confident in their ability to support young people competently. They also feel well supported through regular supervision, team meetings and approachable managers. This enables them to provide good support to the young people.

The internal monitoring is carried out as required and copies of the subsequent reports are sent in to Ofsted. These reports demonstrate that the manager reflects on the outcome of the monitoring in order to develop and improve the service for the benefit of the young people. This monitoring feeds in to the comprehensive development plan for the home, which includes recruiting more staff and developing the staff who are already employed by the home.

The children and young people who live at this home have a variety of complex needs. Staff are very committed to the young people; they know and understand their needs well and demonstrate commitment to meeting those needs in sometimes challenging circumstances. Young people relate well to the staff team and are happy and settled. They are kept safe because risks are very thoroughly assessed and measures are put in place to minimise the risks. There are a number of incidents which occur on a regular basis, some of which require restraint. These incidents are fully recorded and monitored to ensure the actions are necessary, proportionate and appropriate.

Children and young people benefit from contact with their families, either by going home or by parents visiting this home. A parent commented that he was always made welcome when he visited the home and that staff were good at keeping him informed of any issues which related to his child. The home organises occasional fun days or Christmas parties to which parents are also invited, which further supports family involvement in their children's care.

Children and young people have excellent school attendance and make good progress. A recent review commented that a young person 'has settled at school and is achieving the expected levels'. Another review commented that a young person 'has settled well and is getting better at taking turns'. All but one attend the same school, which is very conveniently situated to the home. There are good links with the schools to ensure that staff work in partnership and provide consistent support.

Children and young people access community facilities, mainly at the weekend and in school holidays. They go to local shops to spend their pocket money, go rambling, bowling, swimming and have trips out in the home's transport. They also have access to many facilities in the home such as a soft play area, sensory room, toys, games, arts and crafts and organised activities such as drama. Young people develop their confidence, skills and self-esteem as a result of their achievements.

Independence is promoted wherever possible; young people are encouraged to do as much as they can for themselves, such as making their own breakfast or taking their laundry to the washing machine. Each young person has a number of targets to work on, such as walking rather than running, and sharing. Staff use social stories to enable young people to understand what is happening or what is expected, such as taking medication. This results in small but measurable progress in relation to their behaviour and social skills.

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*.