

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC044224
Inspector	Lynn O'Driscoll
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Progress Care and Education Limited
Registered person address	Progress Care (Holdings) Ltd, Pear Tree Street Bamber Bridge PRESTON PR5 6EZ
Responsible individual	Margaret Calvert
Registered manager	Paul Lonergan
Date of last inspection	20/11/2014

Inspection date	05/03/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

The four requirements made at the last full inspection on 20 November 2014 have been fully addressed. Consequently, an application to register a manager was received by Ofsted. He was interviewed and found suitable. All staff now benefit from annual appraisals and timely mandatory courses to demonstrate that they are competent to work with highly vulnerable and challenging young people. This also means that there are more staff qualified to safely administer first aid and to prepare homemade nutritious meals.

Monitoring systems have also been strengthened to include an evaluation of staff training needs and consultations with the young people accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. Reports by the manager on the quality of care provided in the home are much improved. They are more detailed and evaluative. Moreover, sanction records now detail the effectiveness of each measure imposed. However a requirement has been raised because: the sanction records do not always detail the exact location within the home as a means of monitoring any patterns and trends; one sanction has not been recorded within 24 hours; and, the use of jargon means that the description of the actual measure imposed would not always be clear to anyone working outside of this company.

Two recommendations were also made at the last inspection. In response, signed consent is now in place from parents and social workers in respect to the practice of locking the front door. There is also a more effective system in place to ensure that all care staff attain a minimum level 3 qualification in a timely manner. Consequently, since the last inspection there is an increase in qualified staff working at the home.

This home is always sufficiently staffed with a good ratio of qualified staff on duty to meet the highly complex needs of all the young people. The home also ensures the

timely provision of a wide range of appropriate specialist services.

The staff confirm a very supportive team. One member of staff said, 'I enjoy my job. We have good relationships with all the young people and my colleagues and we get regular supervision, support and training. The home is really good with training.'

However, this home is currently carrying six vacancies. Recruiting and retaining experienced and competent staff to meet the young people's severe learning disabilities and associated extreme challenging behaviours is proving to be difficult. This is currently effectively managed with overtime and support from experienced staff within the wider company who know the young people well. However, the company is mindful that this situation cannot be sustained long term and moving forward have established strong links with local colleges, job centres and recruitment agencies.

There have been a number of positive developments since the last inspection. In particular, the management team have significantly strengthened the monitoring systems in place. This includes more robust scrutiny of restraints, medication procedures and, the timeliness of social worker visits and reviews. One young person's file is always examined in detail as part of monthly independent monitoring visits. This ensures they include all the required information and are maintained to a good standard. One member of staff said, 'Things have improved quite a bit recently. There is more structure.'

Feedback from parents, social workers and other stakeholders is consistently positive. Without exception, completed surveys all highlight the, 'Excellent communication' they have with the home. Parents confirm that they feel listened to about their child's care. Comments include, 'This service offers a consistent approach between the home and the school and the staff are always professional, approachable and very adaptable to the child's needs', 'Regular meetings are held to analyse and assess behaviour', 'Reviews are well organised and the information presented clearly demonstrates that the young person is making good, steady progress', 'I am impressed by the way the service reflects on young people's progress and revise plans accordingly', 'Excellent links are made with families. The staff have an insightful analysis of individual needs' and, 'The quality of care is excellent and my young person is progressing well.'

School attendance is excellent and care staff stay with the young people throughout the school day to ensure consistency of care. All the young people's concentration spans continue to improve. One young person is now learning in a classroom setting with other pupils, which is significant progress. His reading continues to improve and he is learning to tell the time. Another young person is starting to number match.

Young people's good health is actively promoted and the staff benefit from the expertise of the company's nurse. All the young people enjoy regular physical exercise. One young person recently went to the local dentist and allowed the

dentist to undertake a full dental check for the first time. Other significant improvements include, sleeping and eating patterns and the cessation of self injurious behaviours, which in turn positively impact on physical and emotional well-being.

One parent is thrilled that her son's behaviour has improved so much that contact is now positive and enjoyable. A social worker confirmed, 'My young person has come on in leaps and bounds. He can now form and write sentences so academically he has come on really well and socially he is now sharing a classroom, doing activities with his peers and is able to make his own lunch. He has a busy social life and the staff facilitate regular positive family contact.'

Young people's communication and staff's understanding of their unique preferences continue to demonstrably improve. This results in decreased frustration and incidents. For example, one young person needs to be kept stimulated as he soon gets bored, especially after meal times.

The frequency and duration of restraints has significantly decreased for all the young people. This is despite some extreme challenging behaviours. This demonstrates the staff's ability to successfully de-escalate incidents without the need for a restraint. Indeed, an independent visitor assessing the quality of care provided in the home, recently directly observed staff successfully diffusing a potentially volatile incident through redirection.

A positive new development since the last inspection is the introduction of debriefing forms following a restraint. This enables staff to formally reflect on each incident and to consider how to constantly improve practice. Every restraint is reviewed by the manager and analysed at least every eight weeks by a multi disciplinary team to consider patterns and trends. An example being changes in medication. They also review and revise the extremely detailed and individualised placement plans and the associated specific guidance for staff, to ensure the best possible care. One young person is now more able to control his own behaviour which is outstanding progress.

The young people continue to access and enjoy an ever increasing range of community activities. Recent examples include the cinema, farms, museums, a safari park, Halloween and bonfire celebrations, nature reserves, a hydro pool and, a pantomime. One young person has started to go swimming in a public leisure centre and loved going out for a meal at a busy restaurant for his birthday. These are huge achievements. Individual interests and talents are actively encouraged and supported. Examples include horse riding and trampolining.

All the young people are making very good progress in respect to developing their independence skills from their individual starting points. For example, making simple snacks and taking dirty washing to the laundry without being prompted. One young person can now wash and dress himself with minimal support and can effectively

now use photographs to communicate to staff his day-to-day needs and preferences. Such outstanding progress reduces frustrations and anxieties and boosts self esteem and confidence.

All the required health and safety certificates are in place to evidence a safe environment. An ongoing programme of redecoration ensures that the home is maintained to a good standard throughout.

Information about this children's home

This home offers care and accommodation, for up to four young people, of both genders, who have severe learning disabilities compounded by significant challenging behaviours, autism and complex medical conditions.

It is part of a wider private organisation that offers transition from this home to adult residential provision registered with the Care Quality Commission. It also runs an independent 52 week school. It is co-educational and caters for pupils and students from the age of 7 to 19 years old.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/11/2014	Full	adequate
03/02/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
04/06/2013	Full	good
07/03/2013	Interim	inadequate progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

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
17B (2001)	ensure within 24 hours of a sanction being imposed, a written record is made detailing the exact location and a clear description of the measure used. (Regulation 17B(3))	20/03/2015

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information 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 main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.