

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	07/03/2013
Inspector	Lynn O'Driscoll
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	19/09/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home offers care and accommodation, for up to four young people, of both genders, who have severe learning disabilities. 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.

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 **inadequate progress**.

Overall, this home was judged to be good at the last full inspection in September 2012. The outcomes for young people were outstanding. Young people are continuing to make excellent progress, especially given the complexity of their needs and their individual starting points. This is clearly demonstrated by the introduction of new individualised progress books since the last inspection. Examples include significant improvements in toileting, reading, writing, concentration and awareness of surroundings. One young person has now progressed to the national curriculum in literacy and numeracy.

However, two of the three requirements made at the last inspection have not been fully addressed. In general, monitoring processes have been strengthened. All the required health and safety certificates are now in place and records of fire checks are now satisfactorily maintained to evidence a safe and well maintained home.

Personalised evacuation plans are also now in place for each young person. However, restraint records are still not satisfactorily maintained or closely scrutinised to demonstrate safe and effective practice. Regulation 33 reports and six monthly Regulation 34 reports still do not include the outcomes of consultations with parents and placing authorities on the quality of care provided.

Actions to train and support staff are incomplete. However, staff are now suitably trained in restraint, safeguarding and countering bullying. Rotas are now carefully organised to ensure there is always at least one qualified first aider on duty at all times to attend to any minor injuries. There are plans for first aid training for all staff by mid-April. Funding has also been agreed for on-line training in food hygiene, as staff do prepare meals for young people. However, this training has not yet been delivered. Additionally, staff still do not receive supervision at the frequency prescribed by the company's policies.

Five recommendations were also made at the last inspection, but only two have been satisfactorily addressed. Child friendly, pictorial children's guides have been developed and there are now questionnaires for parents and other stakeholders. All the feedback to date is very positive. A basic risk assessment has recently been produced in respect to the practice of locking the front door. However, this has not, as yet, been discussed and agreed with parents and placing authorities. Moreover, there is not an effective system in place for ensuring all unqualified staff are working towards the level three Children and Young Peoples Workforce Diploma within six months of confirmation of employment. Additionally, the Statement of Purpose has not been reviewed in the last twelve months to ensure it continues to accurately describe the aims, policies and practices of the home and the facilities and other services provided to young people and their families.

Young people are enabled to express their wishes and feelings and make informed choices by means of the most up to date communication aids. They are happy, settled and much calmer in this home and benefit from always having a good night's sleep. Consequently, there are noticeable improvements in behaviours. In turn, this has resulted in a significant reduction in the use of restraints. One young person, previously considered unsafe in the kitchen, is now helping prepare homemade nutritious meals. Healthy eating and regular physical exercise has also resulted in appropriate weight loss. All the young people enjoy taking part in a good range of meaningful activities, both in the home and the local community. This includes joining local clubs and taking part in events for charity, thereby helping them to develop a strong sense of belonging. Horse riding is a particular favourite leisure pursuit. One young person has recently been on holiday for the first time. Another young person, following months of gentle encouragement from the staff, is beginning to enjoy swimming. Moreover, he can now tolerate another young person in the water with him. All these opportunities help to further develop their social skills and increase their confidence.

Staff have also successfully advocated to ensure all the young people benefit from regular and constructive contact with their families. One young person's bedroom has been decorated since the last inspection and he loves it. Comments from social

workers include, 'I am very happy with this placement. The young person is making good progress educationally and learning new independence skills. He is safe and well cared for. The home is comfortable and well managed' and, 'The staff are brilliant. They ensure an individualised and consistent approach and he has made significant improvements in his time here'. Stakeholders identify key strengths: the professionalism and flexibility of the staff to meet the unique and highly complex needs of the young people; the high quality activities on offer to them; and, the comprehensive reports prepared to inform statutory reviews about the excellent progress young people are making. At a recent statutory review an independent reviewing officer praised the company for the specific structures they have put in place to benefit individual young people.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that a record is made of any measure of control, restraint or discipline which shall include all the details specified in the Regulations (Regulation 17B (3) and (4))	31/03/2013
27 (2001)	ensure all staff receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal, in particular, training in first aid and food hygiene (Regulation 27(4)(a))	15/04/2013
33 (2001)	ensure the person carrying out the (Regulation 33) visit shall interview, with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents, relatives and person's working at the home in order to form an opinion of the standard of care in the home (Regulation 33(4)(a))	31/03/2013
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for monitoring and improving the quality of care that shall provide for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34(1) (3))	31/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure visits of the home carried out under Regulation 33 include checks of any disciplinary measures and use of restraint, specifically, that monitoring ensures safe and effective practice (NMS 21.7)

- ensure physical restrictions on normal movement within or from the home are used only to safeguard children and promote their welfare and development. Specifically, take account of statutory Volume 5 guidance (para 2.108) for risk assessment and locking of doors (NMS 10.4)
- ensure all existing care staff have attained a minimum level 3 qualification and all new staff are working towards this within six months of confirmation of employment (NMS 18.5)
- ensure the registered person approves and reviews the Statement of Purpose at least annually. (NMS 13.3)

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*.