

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC044224
Inspector	Lynn O'Driscoll
Type of inspection	Full
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	Interim Manager - Paul Lonergan
Date of last inspection	03/02/2014

Inspection date	20/11/2014
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	adequate
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	adequate
Leadership and management	inadequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	adequate
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Young people and enjoy living at this home. They benefit from sound relationships with the staff and highly personalised care which meets their unique and extremely complex needs. Given their starting points they are all making good progress. Examples include improved: self-care, eating and sleeping patterns, communication and concentration.

This home provides a particularly responsive, flexible and needs led service. Consequently, parents, social workers and other stakeholders are all consistently positive about the quality of care provided.

The managers have shared the development plan with the staff team so there is a strong sense of shared responsibility and accountability to continuously improve upon the services provided.

However, there are four breaches of regulation arising from this inspection and two recommendations are made. This is to ensure that: all staff are suitably qualified and trained; the monitoring systems are strengthened especially in relation to staff training needs, sanction records and external consultations; a timely manager application is submitted to Ofsted; and, there are robust processes in place for regularly risk assessing and gaining required consent for the locking of the front

door, given that this is a restriction of liberty.

To date, fortunately, none of these shortfalls have had a negative impact on the health and safety of the young people currently accommodated.

Full report

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
03/02/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
04/06/2013	Full	good
07/03/2013	Interim	inadequate progress
19/09/2012	Full	good

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 sanction records detail the effectiveness of each measure imposed (Regulation 17B(3)(f))	12/12/2014
27 (2001)	ensure all the staff receive appropriate training and appraisal and are enabled to obtain qualifications appropriate to the work they perform (Regulation 27(4)(a)and(b))	28/02/2015
34	ensure that the system for monitoring and	31/12/2014

(2001)	improving the quality of care provided in the home includes an evaluation of staff training needs and consultations with the young people accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34(1)(3), Schedule 6(24))	
8 (2001)	forward to Ofsted a manager application to register demonstrating this individual has the qualification, skills and experience necessary and is physically and mentally fit to manage this particular children's home. (Regulation 8)	05/12/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure an effective system is in place for ensuring that 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)
- demonstrate that: physical restrictions on normal movement within or from the home are not used unless this is necessary to safeguard the young people and promote their welfare and development; such measures, namely the locking of doors, are agreed by the responsible authorities and parents; and, a restriction of liberty for one young person does not impose similar restrictions on other young people who do not require this. (NMS 10.4)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people are happy and settled at this home. One young person confirmed that the staff are, 'Very helpful and caring.' They all particularly enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities and trips out enabling them to develop their social skills. This includes joining local clubs and taking part in events for charity, thereby helping them to develop a strong sense of belonging. Firm favourites include swimming, trampolining, horse-riding and a sensory play centre. One young person who had never previously eaten in a restaurant, now enjoys lunch out every Friday.

They enjoy good physical health and benefit from homemade nutritious meals, plenty of fresh air and regular physical exercise. None of the young people smoke, consume alcohol or take illicit drugs.

The majority of young people benefit from regular contact with their families which maintain important family relationships. Effective arrangements are also in place to relieve anxieties should parents fail to attend.

Significantly improved outcomes as a direct result of living at this home include: transitions, communication, and eating habits. One young person is particularly benefitting from improved sleeping patterns. This means he is less tired during the day which has demonstrably decreased episodes of challenging behaviours. There is also a marked reduction in behaviours that have previously resulted in self injury. Another young person is loving to hear his own increased vocal pitches.

The majority of the young people attend the company's specialist school. Their attendance is excellent. One young person is home schooled. They are all making good progress from their individual starting points. In particular they are now engaging in group sessions and their concentration span has significantly improved. Other outcomes include the ability to tell the time, read, write simple sentences, and, undertake a Nationally recognised qualification.

The daily life of this home provides age and ability appropriate opportunities for all the young people to develop social and independent skills. Self-care skills have demonstrably improved. Examples include: washing, brushing teeth and dressing with prompts; taking washing to the laundry; using a knife to cut and spread food and clearing and cleaning the table after meals. They also really enjoy cooking and baking. One young person who was not allowed in the kitchen for safety reasons twelve months ago, now makes his own breakfast with minimal help.

Comments from social workers include, 'The staff at this home provide a very caring and nurturing environment and are skilled at working with young people on their independent living skills' and, 'The staff at this home are particularly skilled in doing

social stories to enable my young person to face various challenges. This means he enjoys increased access to community activities. He has been to a museum, bowling, the zoo and a play centre which is a huge achievement'.

Quality of care

good

All the young people benefit from highly personalised care in line with their up-to-date, comprehensive and particularly child-friendly placement plans. These provide very clear and detailed guidelines for staff on exactly how to support each young person to ensure his safety and happiness at all times. The staff work on a minimum of one-to-one ratios and are very attentive to individual needs and preferences. Consequently, young people's unique and highly complex needs are well met. An educational psychologist is particularly impressed with, 'The regular insightful analysis of individual needs.' Social workers confirm that, 'The staff have durability and a willingness to be very adaptable to meet individual needs' and, 'The staff are very child centred, try innovative approaches and ensure good communication.'

The effective use of electronic devices and pictorial choice boards enables all the young people to express their wishes and feelings and make informed choices about their day-to-day living preferences. Individual interests and talents are actively encouraged and supported by the staff which increases young people's competences and confidence. Their parents are also actively involved in care planning and their views and wishes about their child's care are respected and positively acted upon.

Internal questionnaires are given to parents and stakeholders at statutory reviews. Constructive criticism is positively responded to as one means of continuously improving upon the services provided. Recent examples include, providing weekly telephone updates to one parent, sending more photographs of their child to another parent and, forwarding more detailed reports to social workers following a significant incident. Another recent positive development is the introduction of a monitoring system to specifically ensure timely social workers' visits and statutory reviews.

Placing authorities and other stakeholders confirm high satisfaction with the quality of care provided at this home. Many highlight the consistent approach to behaviour management within the children's home and the company's school. Comments include, 'I am impressed with the care they give to the young people. I have found that staff are particularly willing to go out of their way to support family contact. They also provide very detailed clear reports for reviews', 'The staff appear to make significant efforts to ensure the young people are empowered. This is not an easy task as they all have complex cognitive and linguistic difficulties'.

'The management team are organised and the staff are very caring. The young people's well-being clearly comes first. They really know them well' and, 'The staff have a thorough understanding of the young people and put in place individualised learning and support programmes that appear to be very effective.'

A key strength of this home is access to a wide range of specialist services to meet more specific and highly complex needs and thereby continuously improving outcomes for all the young people. Examples include speech and language and sensory therapists and behaviour management specialists.

Good health and well-being is actively promoted at this home. The staff prepare young people particularly well for health appointments as this can significantly raise their anxieties. The young people and staff also benefit from the expertise of a qualified nurse, employed by the company, who regularly visits the home. Consequently, she has secured a very good relationship with all the young people and has an excellent understanding of their individual health needs. There are robust procedures in place to ensure the safe administration of first aid and medication. Only experienced and fully trained staff administer medication. Rotas are also carefully organised to ensure there is always at least one qualified first aider on duty at all times to ensure an effective response to any minor injuries.

Education is actively promoted by the staff. Most of the young people attend a specialist school run by this company which best meets their assessed educational, behavioural and emotional needs. The curriculum is specifically tailored to meet the individual needs of each pupil. The care staff stay with them throughout the school day to ensure consistency of care and to support their unique needs thus enabling them to meet their full potentials.

An on-going programme of re-decoration and refurbishment is in place to ensure that the home is maintained to a good standard. Young people's bedrooms have recently been redecorated and furnished to individual needs and preferences. On admission, one young person was soon able to tolerate some of his possessions in his room. Now he enjoys playing in this private space surrounded by all his toys and belongings. Another young person benefits from the use of his own lounge when he wants some quiet time.

Keeping children and young people safe adequate

Young people feel safe and secure at this home.

Since the last inspection there have been no safeguarding concerns, complaints, serious illnesses, incidents of young people going missing, offending behaviours or bullying. Managers across the company have also successfully completed safeguarding training for their designated officers role to ensure an effective response to any disclosures of abuse. External stakeholders confirm good collaborative working with this home to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young people placed.

Detailed and effective individual risk assessments are in place which enables young

people to be actively involved in a wide range of constructive activities in the local community. The increased use of social stories has proven to successfully alleviate a number of different anxieties and has significantly improved transitions.

This home ensures good staffing ratios and therefore close supervision at all times. Most of the staff also have an excellent knowledge of each young person's specific triggers and can, therefore, successfully diffuse some challenging behaviours. Consequently, for the majority of the young people, the use of restraint has significantly decreased. However, for one young person the frequency and severity of incidents remain high. The findings of a new and effective system for monitoring and evaluating incidents of restraints is fully discussed at frequent multi-disciplinary meetings enabling individual behaviour support plans to be reviewed and revised accordingly. This robust process clearly demonstrates a correlation between an increase in restraints following medication changes and particularly hot weather. On arrival at school one young person goes into the break room to give him some much needed processing time before starting lessons. This is proving to be effective in reducing some extreme challenging behaviour.

Good behaviour, manners and effort is constantly positively reinforced which has the desired effect. One young person knows if he is a good boy at the public swimming pool he can choose one item from the vending machine which he looks forward to.

Sanction records are signed by a manager to evidence that they have been read. However, out of 23 entries since the last inspection there are only two comments from managers about the fairness, proportionality and effectiveness of the sanctions imposed. Close scrutiny is a legal requirement as a means of trying to reduce incidents. For example, staff have recently introduced a social story to explain to one young person exactly what he will be doing after meal times. This has proven to reduce his anxieties and consequent aggression.

All health and safety certificates are in place and fire checks are consistently undertaken at the required frequency. This ensures a safe and well-maintained building. Personalised evacuation plans for each young person and regular fire drills undertaken at different times of the day and night ensure that all the young people and staff know exactly what to do in the case of a real fire.

Staff personnel files include all the required information to evidence a robust recruitment and selection process.

Leadership and management

inadequate

A suitably qualified and experienced individual moved from another children's home within the company to manage this home in September 2014. However no application to register has been received by Ofsted. There were a number of factors causing a delay, including obtaining the required health information from his General

Practitioner.

This home currently has four vacancies. The required staffing ratios are maintained by offering staff overtime. Behaviour support workers and teachers, who know the young people well, also do shifts to ensure continuity and consistent care. Ratios are increased for specific activities. Examples include medical appointments and night-time routines. These arrangements ensure that the home is always well staffed to meet the unique and highly complex needs and personal preferences of the young people.

Staff confirm that managers are accessible and approachable and listen to their views as to how the service could be developed. A child-focused development plan is in place which has been shared with the whole staff team so there is a genuine sense of ownership and accountability to continuously drive improvements.

Staff also confirm that their induction prepared them for their roles. However, some did not feel that their on-going training needs were identified and met. There was also some dissatisfaction with the current appraisal process as another means of exploring their own professional development. The current systems in place for monitoring staff training needs are not sufficiently robust. Consequently, not all the staff have completed the qualification required of their respective roles and a number have not undertaken some mandatory courses or received timely refreshers. There are also ineffective arrangements in place for ensuring that all unqualified staff are working towards the level three Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma within six months of confirmation of their employment.

The manager's monthly monitoring has not identified these shortfalls. The last report simply lists the training available as opposed to which staff require it and the dates of the next available courses. The process must also include an evaluation of consultations with parents and placing authorities. However, the most recent report simply reads, 'All placing authorities are consulted at reviews.'

A report following an independent monitoring visit to the home in October 2014 was not available for inspection. This means any shortfalls identified may not be efficiently addressed.

The three requirements made at the last interim inspection on 3 February 2014 have been actioned. Consequently, the staff are now aware of the incidents requiring notification to Ofsted. There has not been any since the last inspection. The pot holes in the grounds of the home have been filled as one means of preventing accidents. A risk assessment on the home's location, has also been produced. It is situated on a busy road which directly links to the practice of locking the front door. This is a restriction of liberty. The required process of frequent reviews of individual risk assessments and annual signed consent by parents and placing authorities is not stringently applied. This means the home fails to demonstrate that this practice remains necessary to safeguard all the young people and promote their welfare and

development.

The Statement of Purpose is frequently revised to ensure it always accurately describes the current staffing structures, aims, policies and practices of the home and the facilities and services provided to young people and their families. All the young people have a personalised and meaningful children's guide which meets their particular needs and abilities.

Young people's files are well maintained. They are personalised and child centred, and provide very clear and detailed directions about their preferred care. Individual progress reports clearly demonstrate the continued good progress all the young people make from their individual starting points.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

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.