

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC044231
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	Joanne Law
Date of last inspection	12/05/2014

Inspection date	02/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

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

The one requirement and two recommendations made at the last full inspection on 12 May 2014 have been fully addressed. The admission and discharge register now includes all of the required information. Restraint records provide more detail about de-escalation techniques tried, young people's views and the de-briefing of staff in order to continuously improve practice. The revised child protection, safeguarding and whistle-blowing policies and procedures have been discussed with the staff who have signed to say they have read, understood and will adhere to them.

The new Registered Manager is suitably qualified and experienced, extremely child-focussed and leads by example. This instils in the staff a strong passion and a genuine motivation and commitment to try to continuously improve the life chances of all the young people. There have been a number of positive developments under her leadership. In particular, she has significantly strengthened the monitoring systems in place by including more robust scrutiny of the use of restraint, medication procedures and the timeliness of social work visits and reviews. As part of the monthly independent monitoring visits one young person's file is always examined in detail. This ensures that case files include all the required information and are maintained to a good standard. The separate health files have been improved upon since the last inspection so that they are now more child-friendly. A quality assurance file has also been introduced. This ensures the home's development plan is regularly reviewed and revised to demonstrate continuous improvement.

The new management team provide clear direction and ensure that the 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. However, it is proving to be a challenge to recruit competent and experienced staff to meet the needs of young people with severe learning disabilities and extremely challenging behaviour. Currently there are six staff vacancies. At the moment the situation is being effectively managed partly because all of the young people enjoy frequent extended breaks with their families and partly because some staff want to work overtime. Nevertheless, the company is mindful of the fact that this cannot be sustained long-

term and has established good links with local colleges, job centres and recruitment agencies. Recent staff changes, most notably due to maternity leave, mean that currently nearly half of the team are still undertaking the qualifications required for their respective positions. This is being closely monitored to ensure timely completion.

Since October 2014 when the new manager started, all of the staff have benefitted from regular supervision. The process has been strengthened to encourage more reflection about what has gone well since the last session and ways of improving their practice. One member of staff said, 'It's good that we now get feedback which helps to improve our performance.' However, prior to the manager's appointment not all staff benefited from formal supervision at the frequency prescribed in the company's supervision policy. One annual appraisal is also overdue. An ongoing training programme ensures that all the staff are up to date with their mandatory training and receive timely refreshers. Only one member of staff has yet to attend an advanced autism course. The course itself is highly relevant to the care needs of the young people who are currently living in this home.

A new recording format has been introduced to demonstrate more effectively young people's individual progress. Significant positive outcomes since the last inspection include a marked reduction in self-injurious behaviour and demonstrable improvements in mobility, communication and toileting. One young person who recently came to live at the home used a wheelchair whilst out in the community prior to being admitted. She now walks everywhere. Another young person is enjoying a more varied diet and a reduction in his medication. His confidence has also improved to the extent that he now chooses to eat with the other young people.

The staff are strong and effective advocates for the young people. This has successfully ensured, for example, that complex health needs are diagnosed and appropriate treatment provided. This inevitably improves young people's physical and emotional well-being which in turn reduces anxiety, challenging behaviour and the need for the use of restraint.

The staff respond very effectively to a significant number of extremely challenging behaviours without having to resort to the use of physical intervention. Whenever restraint is used, each and every incident is reviewed by the manager and analysed at minimum eight week intervals by a multi-disciplinary team in order to identify any patterns or trends caused, for example, by changes in medication. However, although any first aid administered following the use of restraint is recorded in the incident report, it is not consistently recorded in the official first aid book. The multi-disciplinary team also reviews and revises the extremely detailed and individualised placement plans and the associated detailed guidance for staff on how to ensure the best possible care.

A key strength of this home is the wide range of specialist services that are actively involved in meeting individuals' needs. The manager has recently sent out a survey to gain partners' views on the quality of care provided by the home. A specialist felt that one young person has progressed so much that, 'He is now calmer through

using timelines, following a range of symbols and is confident to sit and move around without constantly touching staff for comfort.'

Feedback from parents, social workers and other stakeholders is consistently positive. However, there is no documentary evidence to show that the views of all the parents about their children's care are regularly ascertained in order to inform the development of the service. Without exception, completed surveys all highlight the 'excellent communication' they have with the home and confirm 'good partnership working.' Comments from parents include, 'The staff are caring and compassionate' and 'I have seen improvements in my daughter. She is not as anxious and angry. She is safe and seems calmer.' One parent is thrilled that they can now go out for walks with their son because his demeanour and behaviour have continued to improve significantly since moving to this home.

The feedback from social workers and independent reviewing officers is also very positive: 'I am very happy with this placement. The home provides very positive experiences for the young people. It is well managed and the staff work flexibly to meet individual needs'; 'I am happy with this placement. The care is very good. They know my young person well and are always one step ahead in respect of her behaviour. I can't fault the communication'; 'The staff have a very good insight into my young person's needs and her communication has improved'; and 'This home provides highly individualised care and careful analysis of individual needs to promote best outcomes.'

School attendance is excellent and care staff stay with the young people throughout the school day to ensure consistency of care. One young person is now learning in a classroom setting with other pupils, which represents significant progress.

Another key strength of this service is that risk assessments are extremely thorough. This enables all of the young people to access and enjoy a wide range of community activities. As an example, recently they all thoroughly enjoyed watching a pantomime at a local theatre.

In order to promote healthy living, the home has improved the quality of meals provided by ensuring a greater range of nutritious homemade choices. They also encourage young people to enjoy the benefits of regular physical exercise; swimming and long walks are firm favourites. This has resulted in one young person becoming healthier by losing weight.

All of the young people are making very good progress in developing their independence skills, relative to their individual starting points, in ways that increase their confidence and self-esteem. For example, one young person is now able to dress herself, take her dirty washing to the laundry, make herself a drink and set the table before meals. She is now learning to wash her own hair.

Since the last inspection another young person has successfully moved into young adult provision provided by the company. A member of staff, with whom he has a particularly good relationship, moved with him. This enabled him to feel safe and to settle in quickly. It also ensured consistency of care. The transition was managed

sensitively and gradually at the young person's pace.

An ongoing programme of redecoration ensures that the home is maintained to a good standard throughout. Recent improvements include new carpets in the hall, stairs and landing. All of the doors have also been re-painted. When one young person came to live at the home their bedroom was redecorated and personalised. Another young person has new furniture and a new carpet. Consequently, young people love to relax in their own private spaces.

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 transitions from this home to adult residential provision registered with the Care Quality Commission. It also runs an independent 52 week school which is co-educational and caters for pupils and students from the age of 7 to 19 years.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/05/2014	Full	good
27/03/2014	Interim	good progress
12/07/2013	Full	adequate
04/03/2013	Interim	satisfactory 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
25 (2001)	ensure that there is at all times a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons working at the children's home. Specifically, ensure that the service is fully staffed (Regulation 25)	16/04/2015
27 (2001)	ensure that all staff receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal. (Regulation 27(4)(a))	16/04/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure the views of all the young people's families are sought regularly on their care and are taken into account in monitoring staff and in developing the home (NMS 1.4 and 1.7)
- ensure there is a written record of all first aid given to young people during their placement. Specifically, that the use of first aid is consistently recorded in the designated first aid book. (NMS 6.15)

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.