

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	04/03/2013
Inspector	Lynn O'Driscoll
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/11/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This home is registered to provide 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 which 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 **satisfactory progress**.

Overall, this service was judged to be adequate at the last full inspection on 7 November 2012. The outcomes for young people were good.

The seven requirements made at the last inspection have all been satisfactorily addressed. In particular, staff have benefited from increased training opportunities. Consequently, all staff are now suitably trained in positive handling, safeguarding, countering bullying and fire safety. This ensures safe and consistent practices. However, the current system is not sufficiently robust to ensure that all staff are working towards the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma within six months of confirmation of employment.

Restraint records now include all the required information, and in particular details of

any medical treatment administered to the young person concerned. Also, the home now ensures that at all times there is at least one person on duty who has a first aid qualification to respond effectively to a minor injury. Moreover, by the end of March 2013, all staff will have undertaken a first aid course.

Each young person has their own highly personalised children's guide which has been updated to include the contact details of Ofsted and the Children's Rights Director for England. However, the home's Statement of Purpose is not reviewed at least annually to ensure it always accurately describes the aims, policies and practices of the service and the facilities available to young people and their families.

Monthly reports reviewing the quality of care now include consultations with parents, social workers and independent reviewing officers. This positive feedback will inform the next six monthly report and the annual development plan. At a recent statutory review an independent reviewing officer concluded that, 'This young person has improved in this placement and is happy and settled.' Comments from parents include: 'I am very happy with my son's care and extremely happy that his medication has reduced;' 'I am happy with the quality of care provided and especially the outings and activities he takes part in;' and 'I am particularly pleased that specialist workers are involved with my daughter.' A key strength identified by stakeholders is the continuity of care between the home and the school and the adaptability to meet each young person's unique and highly complex needs. A recent quality assurance visit from a local authority highlighted the, 'Impressive staffing levels.' A consultant psychiatrist commented, 'I was very much helped by the comprehensive report supplied by the behaviour support staff.'

Improvements have been made to the recording of prescribed medications. However, the current system still makes the monitoring of stock and the following through of discrepancies difficult. There is a particular issue when young people go home and the expected quantity is not returned.

Since the last inspection the fire safety processes in the home have been significantly strengthened. For example, the fire risk assessment has been reviewed and the shortfalls identified have been satisfactorily addressed. Action included: ensuring all furniture and furnishings complied with current fire safety standards; undertaking monthly fire drills involving young people; and fitting smoke seals to bedrooms. Individualised evacuation procedures are also now in place for each young person and the fire service has been informed of the changes.

Four recommendations were also made at the last inspection and the majority have been satisfactorily addressed. In response, there is now a more robust system in place for ensuring any shortfalls identified in external and internal monitoring reports are efficiently addressed. Consequently, the stair bannister has been replaced. In general, recordings have also improved. However, a young person's file did not include their statutory review minutes and pathway or transition plans. These documents are essential in ensuring the home is following the recommendations of the relevant local authority.

A first aid book has recently been introduced. The entries suitably cross reference with other relevant documentation, for example incident records. Moreover, funding has been agreed for all the staff to complete an online food hygiene course.

Recent improvements to the home include repainting the conservatory where some young people eat and new blinds and tablecloths for it. It overlooks the extensive garden which has also been tidied up. However, a settee in a young person's bedroom needs repairing or replacing.

Young people are continuing to make good progress. This has resulted in a reduction in the use of restraints and medication. For one young person there is significantly less self-injurious incidents. They are also now tolerating sharing a classroom with another young person. Moreover, young people now enjoy more home visits. This is because their behaviours are more manageable and they are more independent. They continue to take part in the very good range of meaningful activities on offer, both in the home and the community. This includes regular charity events. Consequently, young people's social interactions are improving and their self-esteem and confidence is increasing. They are also continuously developing independence skills. An educational psychologist reported, 'This young person has made great strides and his attention span has increased. His understanding has improved and his fine motor skills. He appears happy and is much more calm'.

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
26 (2001)	ensure all staff have the qualifications necessary for the work they perform, and in particular a recognised and valid food hygiene certificate (Regulation 26 (3)(b))	15/04/2013
28 (2001)	ensure all the records specified in Schedule 3 relating to children are available in their case records, and in particular review minutes and pathway or transition plans (Regulation 28(1)(a), Schedule 3 (18 and 19))	31/03/2013
31 (2001)	ensure the children's home is suitably furnished, and in particular repair or replace a young person's settee. (Regulation 31(4))	18/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure all relevant staff are working towards the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma within six months of confirmation of employment (NMS 18.5)
- ensure that the Statement of Purpose is reviewed at least annually (NMS 13.3)
- ensure there is a written record of all medication given to children during their placement. In particular, strengthen the safeguards in respect to the receipt and release of medication when young people are on home leave. (NMS 6.15)

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*.