

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC044231
Inspection date	22/02/2012
Inspector	Helen Walker
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	18/08/2011
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This service is a privately run children's home. The home provides care and accommodation for four young people with learning disabilities. The premises are suitably adapted to support the young people's needs.

The organisation responsible for the home also operates an independent 52 week residential school.

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 **good** progress.

The overall judgement at the home's last inspection was good. The children's home has demonstrated a continued improvement in quality of care and outcomes for young people. The manager has addressed the one requirement and four recommendations made at the previous inspection. These relate to; fire safety, first aid training and advocates for young people, contact with health professionals and general housekeeping matters.

Fire safety in the house is taken seriously and a current fire risk assessment is in place. Young people and staff participate in regular fire evacuation drills. This ensures young people and staff are familiar with the fire procedures and the action to take in the event of a fire. Young people are cared for by staff that have first aid training. At least one staff member on each duty shift has a current first aid qualification to enable them to administer first aid treatment as necessary. Young people with more specific health needs have good access to health services. This

includes contact with a paediatrician, psychologist and speech and language therapist. The manager has been proactive in sourcing advocacy services for young people. This enables young people to have additional support from people independent of the home.

Young people live in a comfortable and well furnished home. However, some parts of the home, such as the pantry ceiling, an external drain and utility room are in need of maintenance. Although this does not significantly impact on young people, the lack of maintenance detracts from the overall quality of the home environment. Domestic staff are enrolled to undertake a housekeeping qualification to increase their knowledge and understanding of their role. Staff ensure young people's bedrooms are clean with suitable bedding. Additionally, bathrooms now have soap and towels readily available for young people and staff to wash their hands.

Young people are cared for by a consistent and caring staff team who have a good understanding of their individual needs. Staff are well informed about each young person and care for them in a way that enables their needs to be met. The interaction between young people and staff was seen to be warm, engaging and responsive. A strength of the home is the communication between young people and staff. Young people have little or no speech; therefore staff use a range of communication aids to obtain their views. This includes timelines, computers, symbols and picture cards.

Improvements in behaviour management strategies have meant a reduction in the use of physical intervention. This is a very positive outcome for young people. A social worker said staff are, 'attune to young people's needs and understand their behaviour'. Staff encourage young people to eat healthy meals and they support them to participate in a wide range of positive activities. This includes young people's access to leisure activities in the wider community which helps to keep them fit and healthy. Young people are taught social and independence skills which take account of their ability. Tasks such as buttering toast or filling a bowl with cereals are great achievements for some of the young people. A social worker said, 'the young person is much more independent and progress is outstanding'.

Staff understand the need to keep young people safe and receive regular child protection training. Young people make good progress with their education and attend school daily. All young people attend the provider's school.

Training opportunities assist staff to develop their professional knowledge and skills to work with young people. This includes recent training about autism. Staff work very well with placing authorities. A social worker said, 'the home provides an excellent level of care' and the 'placement matches our high expectations. One recommendation has been made from this inspection.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home is well maintained and decorated, in particular the pantry ceiling, external drain and utility room. (NMS 10.3)

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 (March 2011)*.