

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	06/02/2014
Inspector	Sharon Lewis
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	29/10/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is privately owned. It is registered with Ofsted to accommodate up to nine children. It offers long-term care, as well as respite care for children and young people with a learning disability.

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**.

This interim unannounced inspection focuses on the progress made since the last inspection and the outcomes for young people. At the last inspection in October 2013, the home received a good judgement. One recommendation was made which related to the homes' development plan. Leaders and managers have produced a concise development plan. This includes proposed environmental changes, staff training, quality assurance and practice. The home aims to achieve an outstanding judgement and they are producing an action plan to detail how this will be achieved. Young people benefit from a service which is continually improving to meet their collective needs. There are no requirements or recommendations resulting from this inspection.

Young people are continuing to exceed expectations by making significant progress in all areas of their lives. Their achievements are recognised externally by their schools and placing authorities, resulting in them receiving awards. Young people demonstrate greater independence in relation to their personal care and life skills and are making marked progress in accordance with their abilities. For some young people this relates to taking more responsibility with feeding and their personal hygiene. For others, this extends to assisting with their laundry, tidying their

bedrooms, washing up, clearing the table after meals and making themselves drinks and snacks. Young people contribute to the household by assisting with the grocery shopping, meal preparation, cleaning the homes' car and sweeping the drive.

Young people live in a comfortable, relaxing, nurturing environment. The premises are continually being refurbished; this includes repainting the walls and regularly replacing the sofas. The organisation succeeds in providing a 'home from home', where young people can easily settle, and provides a stable base for them to maximise their potential. Parents comment on the positive changes in their child's behaviour, highlighting their improved communication skills and 'calm' demeanour. The home successfully manages young people's transitions back to their family or to an alternate placement. The staff assist with transfer arrangements and help young people settle into their new environment.

The staff take an active role in promoting contact and they ensure arrangements meet young people's best interests. This includes supervising visits within the home, in the wider community and facilitating contact by supporting parents in their own homes where appropriate. The home hosts birthday parties for children, and parents are invited to participate in social outings. Parents recently enjoyed spending Christmas Day with their children at the home. The staff also take time to explain contact plans with young people; this empowers young people and assists with alleviating their anxieties. The organisation is currently applying for planning permission to extend their premises, to build a more spacious contact room for families.

Young people are exercising greater choice and there is a strong promotion of their rights. Young people have advocates and share their views on their day-to-day care and aspirations for the future. Young people have commendable social skills, responding appropriately to guests, engaging in greetings and offering hospitality. Young people benefit from the home's excellent relationship with their respective schools. This contributes to focused care planning which integrates educational targets. The home is currently implementing person centred activity records, which enables them to systematically capture young people's progress.

Young people describe the staff as 'nice' and the state they the manager is 'kind.' Young people appreciate the help they receive, especially in relation to increasing their self-awareness and managing their moods. Young people could not identity how the home could further improve rating it '10 out of 10.' Parents state that they are thankful to the home for 'saving our lives' and giving their child 'a new opportunity.' Social workers are equally complimentary, thanking staff for their 'continued hard work' and for ensuring young people are supported 'to achieve to the best of their ability.' Staff members work to their own strengths, are able to use their initiative and creativity and enjoy their work, particularly in helping young people 'learn new things.'

The home provides a wide range of stimulating activities, which enriches young people's lives. They enjoy socialising with their peer group at discos. Their spiritual needs are met thorough attending their respective places of worship. Within the home young people enjoy messy and soft play, arts and crafts, foot spas and movie nights. Activities include seasonal events, and young people are currently making Valentine cards. They enjoy going out in the community, to the cinema, bowling, restaurants, museums and visiting attractions in central London. Young people celebrate festivals, a recent example being Christmas, when they enjoyed making

cards and decorations and going to see the Christmas lights in the West End. They particularly enjoyed receiving a variety of presents which included the latest technological gadgets.

The home effectively safeguards young people. The staff receive on-going training which enables them to protect young people. Young people learn to manage hazards; an example of which is learning about knife safety during their kitchen skills training. Staff effectively manage challenging needs and undertake appropriate physical interventions if necessary. They praise and encourage young people and help them understand the consequence of their actions. Young people have detailed behaviour support plans which demonstrate a good understanding of their individual needs and triggers.

Young people benefit from strong enthusiastic leadership and management. There is a good relationship with Ofsted and knowledge and implementation of the new legislative changes. The home is currently reviewing care practices to ensure they meet the proposed regulatory requirements. There is a strong desire to be an outstanding service and the home has the capacity to further improve.

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*.