

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspector	Sharon Lewis
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Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	26/06/2012
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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 eight 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 focused on the progress made since the last inspection. The judgement made at the last inspection was good. The outcomes for young people are at the centre of this inspection. The home succeeds in providing a consistently good service for young people. The two recommendations from the last inspection have been effectively addressed. These related to promoting the welfare of young people and taking their views into account. The former related specifically to visitors. Management ensure visits are bound by clear contracts and focus on promoting the safety and welfare of young people. The home competently manages issues and liaises with other professionals. The latter recommendation related to the staff appraisal process. New staff appraisals will be undertaken from April 2013. There is only one recommendation from this inspection. It relates to improving the quality assurance process. The home does not yet consider gathering the views of parents and stakeholders; this would further improve and validate the service.

Young people benefit from a stable staff team and a relaxed, nurturing environment. Young people are happy and comfortable in their surroundings. They describe the home as, 'good'. Some parents also rate the service as, 'good' others describe it as,

'excellent.' Young people are thriving and making significant progress. Staff successfully work with young people to improve their confidence and communication skills. A valued attribute has been the introduction of a total communication system, using pictorial aids. This enables young people to actively express their needs. Young people's inappropriate behaviour is decreasing, as they are able to be understood. Young people enjoy better health outcomes. This includes improvements in their mood, a reduction in their medication, weight loss and the completion of much needed dental work. Staff appropriately refer issues to the relevant professionals. The home efficiently manages risks, by increasing staffing and updating the necessary assessments.

Staff are proactively striving to further improve young people's lives. Young people engage in life enhancing activities. They enjoy interacting with their peers and pursuing their interests. Young people attend after school clubs, an art and craft club, a bike club and a choir. Young people enjoy going out for meals, to the cinema, bowling, to the farm, seaside and visiting attractions in central London. Activities also contribute towards young people's educational development, an example being visiting museums. Young people enjoy amiable relationships with staff and each other. Their social skills are impressive; during the inspection they were assisting with hospitality and led the tour of the premises. Staff are dedicated to building up young people's strengths and their unique abilities. Young people are winning achievement awards and positively contributing to society through volunteering and befriending. Staff work alongside young people to build up their independent living skills. Young people are able to make light meals, set the table, wash up, tidy their room and assist with grocery shopping.

Staff provide personalised care that positively promotes all aspects of a young person's identity. There is a respect for their respective heritage and their diverse diet, festivals and customs. Young people are able to interact socially within their specific cultural community. Staff proactively enable young people to celebrate their religion. An example being Eid where young people were bought traditional clothing, visited by family and staff joined them in having their hands henna painted. The home is particularly thoughtful at birthday times; buying presents which they can take with them into adulthood. Young people benefit from individual life boxes, where staff collect mementoes and photographs of meaningful events. This assists with capturing treasured memories and life story work. It also enables new staff to have a sense of each young person's personality and what is important to them. The box includes young people's certificates, their favourite items and photographs of them on fun activities.

Young people reside in a home which is warm, clean, comfortable and well maintained. Parents describe the home as, 'nice and tidy'. The recent refurbishment provides them with a more vibrant and spacious environment. Young people helped to choose the colours for their walls, new bedding and carpets. More communal areas are being developed for young people. An additional games room is being made upstairs. This former storage room already has a new television and this will be available to play on the various games consoles. Photographs of young people are on display in the lounge and personalised collages are in their bedrooms. Young

people state they, 'like their room'. Bedrooms are personalised and positively reflect their individuality. Young people are looking forward to Christmas and have all received a letter from Santa courtesy of a charity. The safety designed Christmas tree and complementary decorations contribute to the festive atmosphere.

Young people benefit from a competent staff team and dynamic child focused leadership. Strong staff retention contributes to the stable home environment. Young people describe staff as, 'nice' and, 'very caring'. Parents feel the management is, 'wonderful'. Staff ensure parents are well informed and produce regular progress reports for them. It was highlighted that, 'the manager runs a tight ship'. It is the expectation that staff attend all training, supervision and team meetings. There is a commitment to empowering young people. A copy of the children's summary inspection report is on display in the hallway. Staff continue to expand their skills to meet young people's needs. An example of this is the recent pictorial communication training completed by staff. Resident's meetings are being introduced, chaired by a young person. The service is continually evolving to meet the needs of young people. The only recommendation relates to quality assurance. The home does not have a formalised system for gathering the views of parents and stakeholders. The new standards highlight this as an area for consideration for monitoring staff and service development.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- take into account the views of significant persons involved in children's lives in monitoring staff and developing the home. (NMS 1.7)

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*.