

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC064182
Inspection date	04/03/2014
Inspector	Jackie Graves
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	08/01/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2014

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

This privately run home provides accommodation and care for up to six young people with learning disabilities. The service provides both long term and short break placements.

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**.

At the last full inspection in October 2013, the home was judged good. As a result of that inspection, two requirements and four recommendations were made; all have been met, resulting in improvement to the service.

The home was asked to improve how records of any restraints are kept. Incidents of restraint are now recorded appropriately in a bound volume which is tamper-proof. Restraints continue to be safe and low level, such as holding young people's hands and encouraging them to calm down in a quiet area when they become agitated.

Monitoring of what goes on in the home, by an external visitor, has improved as the views of parents and staff are now included; this enables the person carrying out the monitoring visits to gain a more comprehensive view of how the service is performing and identify any shortfalls. Monitoring by the manager is also improved, as reports of their checks are now completed within recommended timescales and are shared promptly with Ofsted so the regulator may have oversight of what is going on in the home.

The home exceeds standards in obtaining three references before appointing new staff. The home's staff recruitment system is improved. Referees are now asked about a person's suitability to work with children and telephone enquiries are also made to verify these references. This helps ensure that only suitable people are employed to work with vulnerable young people.

Staff continue to be well supported in their work, with regular training and supervision. Supervision records are improved as these are now signed at the end of each supervision session to confirm their accuracy.

Some staff find it is 'like a family' in the home and show dedication in their care of young people. They communicate effectively with young people, showing patience and understanding of their needs.

The last inspection found that not all parts of the building were of good quality decoration compared to the lounges which had been refurbished and some aspects could be viewed as patronising considering the age of the young people using the service, for example, a wall mural of Thomas the Tank Engine. The home had identified refurbishment as part of its development plan. Since the last inspection, the redecoration of bedrooms has taken place, with young people and their families helping to choose colours and making suggestions for furniture and fittings. Bedrooms now provide a calmer feel and are better suited to the needs of autistic young people. A refurbished bathroom also provides a better standard of bathing/toilet facilities for young people.

Further improvements to the building are imminent, for example, replacing carpets in bedrooms, redecorating communal areas and improving the lawn area of the garden. The staff sleeping-in room has been used temporarily as a young person's bedroom to help establish their night time routine; this is only a temporary arrangement and the young person will be moving to a more appropriate bedroom very shortly. The door to the en suite bathroom in this room, which is currently used for storage, has a lock which could potentially be overridden by a young person. The radiators in the lounges are not working although temporary heating is in place to ensure the home is kept sufficiently warm.

Parents are made welcome in the home and young people are helped to prepare for their visits so these are enjoyable occasions. A parent 'felt they were listened to' by the staff and manager of the home. Staff work effectively in partnership with parents to help their children make progress, for example, by agreeing a joint-approach to managing young people's emerging sexuality.

Young people are making progress in their eating habits. Some are eating a much better diet as a result of their stay in the home. Some now enjoy freshly cooked foods rather than adhering only to fast foods. They are encouraged to eat fruit and vegetables and try different foods. They learn to associate special days with special foods, for example, observing Shrove Tuesday by eating pancakes.

Young people make progress in their behaviour. Staff know young people's individual needs well and can anticipate triggers which may cause anxiety and could

potentially result in challenging behaviour. Some young people experience improved medication regimes and much better sleep patterns, with more stable behaviour as a result. Some show improvements to their general behaviour.

Those young people who attend school maintain regular attendance. For some, there is improvement in re-establishing routines so they can successfully reintegrate back into their schools. Outside of the school day, young people choose activities in the home which suit their needs, such as using the trampoline or playing with familiar objects. They also experience trips out to places of interest such as Winter Wonderland or the seaside so they can try new things and access the community.

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, with particular reference to ensuring radiators in the lounges function and that access to the bathroom in the staff sleeping-in room is secured. (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*.