

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC066651
Inspection date	14/02/2012
Inspector	Valerie Shephard
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	08/11/2011
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Service information

Brief description of the service

The home is run by a local authority as part of its service to children with disabilities and their families. The home offers residential short break care to young people with severe learning disabilities, some of whom have complex and challenging behaviour.

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 inspection has focused on the progress made by the home since the previous full inspection when the overall effectiveness judgement was good. The home has made good progress in all areas which improves the quality of care and outcomes for young people.

The requirement from the previous inspection pertained to staffing levels and the recommendations related to staff qualifications and supervision levels. The manager has fully addressed the requirement and recommendations made at the last inspection.

Staffing levels are sufficient to meet the needs of the young people in the home and these are in accordance with the Statement of Purpose. The home currently has an acting manager who is a qualified and experienced member of the staff team. This supports consistent management of the home and provides continuity to the young people. Appropriate contingency plans are in place to support the acting manager to fulfil his role.

The staff team are appropriately qualified. All staff members either hold the National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People, or have almost completed this. Where staff are due to be appointed they have already been booked onto a suitable programme. The regularity of supervision for staff has improved considerably and almost all staff receive supervision in the required timescales. A newly introduced monitoring system identifies any shortfalls in the levels of supervision of staff. As a result, young people are cared for by suitably qualified staff who are well supported to meet their needs.

Health and education is the responsibility of parents in respect of almost all of the young people who stay in the home. There is excellent attendance at school and parents address health and disability issues. Young people clearly enjoy their short-break stays and staff and parents comment on the improvements in their behaviour. A review report in respect of one young person commented, 'There are fewer outbursts and the young person appears more relaxed.' One parent said that she has seen improvements with both of her sons in terms of development of independence skills. She commented, 'Having other adults caring for them has been helpful, as my younger son has a tendency to be clingy.' There are very few restraints or sanctions in the home and young people do not go missing.

There is evidence of better consultation methods with young people. The introduction of profiles in young people's records enables staff to quickly gain an understanding of the character of the individual. The use of pictorial formats for menus, activity timetables and meetings has improved communication with young people. These initiatives assist young people to express their views and consequently enable them to influence the running of their home.

The acting manager ensures that the home fulfils its obligations as outlined in the Statement of Purpose. Regulation 33 visits effectively and continually monitor young people's progress. There are regular reviews of the quality of care provided to young people under the regulation 34 requirements. The home's development plan supports the acting manager to identify the strengths in the home and areas for development. There are improved working relationships within the senior management team including better communication methods. These measures assist the manager to provide good quality leadership to staff which is of benefit to young people.

The home is in good condition and the décor and furnishings are of high standard. The garden has safe play equipment and is appropriately fenced in. The home is a safe place for young people with complex care needs.

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)*.