

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC067753
Inspection date	18/01/2013
Inspector	Keith Riley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	19/07/2012
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2013

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 local authority children's home provides care and support for a maximum of 16 children and young people with complex needs. The home can accommodate children and young people with both physical and learning disabilities, some of whom may display 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 **satisfactory progress**.

At the last inspection in July 2012 the home was judged as good for overall effectiveness. There were three requirements and one recommendation made. The Registered Manager now ensures that any events required to be notified to Ofsted are forwarded without delay. Adequate precautions have been taken against the risk of fire in the building adjacent to the home, and there is a risk assessment in place. However, the fire and rescue authority have not been consulted about the precautions being used. This means that the safety measures in place are not fully approved by external professionals. The facility is not being used during the winter period so children and young people are presently not at risk from this shortfall.

The dividing wall has been repaired to a very good standard so that children and young people are able to enjoy different activities in the various parts of the home. Children and young people, who were reluctant to come into the lounge area, now have the opportunity to enjoy doing activities such as computing in there.

The one recommendation to review the staff training records is complete. Senior staff are able to monitor the training requirements for all staff electronically. Children and young people continue to be able to live in a home where the staff who care for them are suitably trained and attentive to their needs. This means they make good progress such as learning how to manage their behaviour and developing independent skills.

There has been development inside and outside the building since the last inspection, such as the painting of murals and replacement of bedroom flooring. Consequently, the environment is not only functional to meet the needs of the children and young people living there but is homely as well. Minor maintenance tasks are identified and clear plans in place to address them, for example a minor water leak. However, some hazards, such as a missing light cover and subsequent exposure of a light emitting diode, are not identified and risk assessed in writing. The potential risk to children and young people has not been fully assessed.

Since the last inspection the Registered Manager has developed a robust procedure for the handling of controlled drugs. This means that the possibility of a medication error is minimised. Any discrepancies are discovered quickly and reported to the relevant authorities. There are protocols in place, agreed with medical professionals, for 'as and when required' medication. This includes a clear description of the presenting behaviours that indicate a child or young person will benefit from a review of the application of their prescribed medication. For example, one particular medication dose reduces over a short space of time to minimise withdrawal effects. Although there is a protocol in place, staff are not always clear on the management of this process. Although children and young people are not at immediate risk, they may not receive the full benefit of their prescribed medication.

Staff ensure that the home is equipped with specialist equipment to meet the needs of children and young people with physical disabilities. This includes a specialist 'high-low', Jacuzzi type bath. This has ongoing maintenance issues and there is very limited access to it due to continual breakdowns. The impact on children and young people is currently minimised due to a low number of current referrals of children and young people with physical disabilities. Staff effectively manage activity timetables so all children and young people have access to the alternate bathroom. However, this is not sustainable long term. Children and young people with physical disabilities or sensory needs do not have easy access to the equipment they need.

Areas for improvement

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
------	-------------	----------

31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by children are equipped with what is reasonably necessary, and adapted as necessary, in order to meet the needs arising from the disability of any disabled child accommodated in the home (Regulation 31 (2) (c))	31/03/2013
32 (2001)	consult with the fire and rescue authority about the precautions taken against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment. (Regulation 32 (1) (a))	31/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure prescribed medication is given to the child in accordance with the prescription; in particular ensure protocols for 'as and when required' medication are clear (NMS 6.14)
- identify and minimise any potential sources of harm to the children and record in writing (NMS 10.8)
- provide a comfortable and homely environment that is well maintained and decorated; in particular ensure the planned repairs are completed. (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*.