

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	07/03/2012
Inspector	Guy Mammatt
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	29/06/2011
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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)*.

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.

Service information

Brief description of the service

The service is run by the local authority. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 10 young people aged five to 17 years of either sex with emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. Primarily this service provides residential assessments for children with complex individual needs and can also accommodate children in crisis, in which case their stay should be much shorter.

The purpose-built house is situated on the site of a local authority special school and has access to some of the school's facilities. The home has its own transport providing access to local amenities and leisure services.

Progress

Since their previous inspection the service is judged to be making **good** progress.

At the full inspection in June 2011, the overall quality rating for the service was judged as good with two requirements and five recommendations set within the inspection report. The home has demonstrated continued improvement in the quality of care and outcomes for young people since the last inspection and has comprehensively addressed all the requirements and recommendations.

The home has produced a children's guide for the service, which includes a summary of the Statement of Purpose and details the complaint procedure for children and young people to access if they wish to raise any concerns about the care they receive. The children's guide has also been written in a format appropriate to the communication needs of the children accommodated in the home. Staff will spend time with new admissions to the placement to ensure the young people and their families understand the contents of the guide. The Registered Manager has written a new Statement of Purpose in response to a recommendation made at the last inspection. The aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose are child-focussed and show how the service will meet outcomes for children. The number of staff plus their relevant qualifications and experience are detailed within the Statement of Purpose. However, this does not currently include details of the new Deputy Manager.

The service has facilities to electronically monitor the children and young people in order to promote their safety and welfare. A clear written security and monitoring procedure is in place for all staff to adhere to. Any restriction of liberty is first subject to a multi-agency meeting, with records to show these measures are not punitive, or constricting the rights of the children and young people. Clear guidelines are in place to ensure electronic monitoring is not used in place of staff supervision and only used to maintain the safety of young people during periods of high anxiety.

The core staff team is fully equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children. Staff have received training around 'intensive interaction' and 'theraplay'. Although the service recognises it sometimes struggles to fund and source all the desired therapeutic input for the young people, the senior staff team have been fortunate enough to receive training with a leading national expert in the field of Autism. As a result of the training, senior staff have been able to 'coach in the work place', cascading the learnt methods throughout the staff team. The Registered Manager has observed positive results with children and young people with Autism at the centre in the short time since the training took place.

The Registered Manager carries out effective monthly monitoring of the service and endeavours to gain feedback from stakeholders to improve the service. Parents have been consulted about the resolution to their own complaints and there is good evidence of efficient internal processes in place to critically analyse the service. The senior care team are forward thinking and always looking to improve their service for the benefit of the young people. The staff team also reflects this enthusiasm in their understanding and commitment to the children and young people they care for.

Children and young people live in a well-designed, safe and pleasant home with plentiful space and furnished to satisfy their needs and requirements. Young people have access to a range of facilities within the home to promote their emotional and social development. Young people are also escorted off-site to engage in community activities and to develop their confidence in public situations.

A considerable amount of effort has gone into establishing an environment where the young people are central to the care they receive and staff have learnt not to dominate proceedings. With the help of expert training and parental involvement, young people develop trusting relationships with the care team. The home provides a valuable service to the young people and families it supports and continues to strive towards achieving the best possible outcomes for the young people in its care.

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
4 (2001)	ensure the registered person completes in relation to the home a written Statement of Purpose which shall consist of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1, with particular reference to the name and qualifications of the persons working at the home. (Regulation 4 (1))	06/04/2012

Recommendations

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