

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC372504
Inspection date	05/03/2013
Inspector	Amanda Ellis
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Date of last inspection	03/10/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This service is part of a privately owned residential school for children and young people with learning difficulties. The service can accommodate up to 55 children and young people.

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 inspection in October 2012 the overall rating for the home was judged as adequate, with three statutory requirements and one recommendation set within the inspection report. The manager has appropriately addressed all the requirements and the recommendation raised at the previous inspection.

The home has made good progress since the last inspection. The management team and staff continue to pursue improvements, which mean young people enjoy positive outcomes and good quality of care.

The requirement to ensure the home is conducted in a manner which respects the privacy and dignity of young people is fully met. Young people with specific personal care needs receive care delivered sensitively, which meets the local authority care plans. Where concerns arise, robust and prompt actions ensure the implementation of safeguarding processes to investigate care practice. These combined processes ensure young people receive care which upholds their right to privacy and dignity.

Young people benefit from living in a range of group homes designed to meet their

individual needs. The requirement to ensure reasonable decoration and maintenance in all areas of the home has been effectively met and exceeds expectations. The homes are personalised, with high standards of décor and furnishings. A rolling programme of maintenance ensures the interior and exterior of the buildings are of a high specification and provide secure and safe accommodation.

The children's guide is now compliant with regulations, insofar as containing information which young people may find useful in relation to contacting Ofsted. This means young people have information and contact details if they wish to express any concerns with Ofsted. However, not all young people have access to their own telephone to make private calls. This may compromise their ability to express any concerns they may have independently of the staff team.

The recommendation to ensure that every effort is made to achieve continuity of staffing is being proactively addressed by the management team. Improvements include considerable investment to improve performance management systems, staff turnover and effective staff recruitment. The management team endeavour to ensure that young people receive care from a stable and well supported staff team.

The home continues to work positively and communicates well with parents, families and professionals. Proactive work ensures that young people benefit from having their needs and welfare closely monitored and reviewed. One parent commented 'The care is beyond our expectations. The bottom line is the progression we have seen in our son.' Another parent stated 'Communication with us is excellent. They work in partnership with us and we are all singing from the same hymn sheet.'

Young people live in a safe, secure and stable environment. The management of safeguarding concerns is exceptional. Safeguarding procedures are robust and well understood. Safeguarding issues are notified promptly. The use of physical restraint in the home is in accordance with the home's policy. Where restraint has occurred, incidents are recorded appropriately and staff involved are suitably trained.

Care planning, risk assessments and behaviour management plans are individualised and comprehensive. However, some records do not have full information. This means lack of clarity in records may impact on staff delivering optimal support to young people.

The leadership and management of the home is clear and efficient. Monitoring is robust and contributes to the development of the home. Regular staff training and supervision ensure quality of care maintained. Staff and managers benefit from a comprehensive programme of training. New staff undertake the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards before progressing to the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma. As a result, staff are suitably qualified to undertake their role.

The management team and staff are skilled and are clear about what is necessary to ensure that young people continue to receive high standards of care. One statutory requirement and one recommendation have been made as a result of this visit.

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
15 (2001)	ensure that children are provided with a telephone on which to make and receive calls in private. (Regulation 15 (4)(a))	02/04/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home has and implements a written policy that clarifies the purpose, format and content of information to be kept on the registered person's files and information to be kept on the child's files. Records may be kept in electronic form, provided the information so recorded is capable of being reproduced in a legible form. Staff understand the nature of records maintained and follow the home's policy for the keeping and retention of files, managing confidential information, and access to files (including files removed from the premises). There is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed.(NMS 22.1)

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*.