

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC389781
Inspection date	19/03/2014
Inspector	Tola Akinde-Hummel
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	07/11/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This service is owned and managed by a limited company. It is fully funded by a local authority for the exclusive use by families and children who live in this borough. It is a respite service for disabled children and young people. This includes children and young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties, physical and learning disabilities, sensory and communication impairment and those who have an autistic spectrum disorder.

The home is registered for eight children and young people at any time. The home also provides an after-school activity club and support for a group of mothers of disabled children of minority ethnic origin.

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**.

The home had a full Ofsted inspection in November 2013. The overall effectiveness of the service was judged as outstanding.

One recommendation was made as a result of this inspection which has been met. The home was to revisit the recording of individual risk assessments to ensure they remained focused. The home has addressed this shortfall and risk assessments are now more focused and relevant. This means that staff will not confuse the risk assessments with other general information contained in children's files.

There were no children and young people present at the time of the inspection. The

inspection relied on records, talking to staff and exploring the building. In addition a number of discussions with parents confirmed that they remain happy with the service on offer. One parent said, ' My child has come a long way since coming here. My child loves coming and I could not ask for a better placement.'

The home has had one complaint since the previous inspection. The complaint was investigated and dealt with promptly and appropriately to the satisfaction of the complainant.

Children and young people have detailed assessments of their needs prior to accessing the service. Parents and carers are asked to give full information and visit the home prior to taking up a place. One parent who has recently been introduced to the service said, 'They did a full assessment and know a lot about my child. There have been no tears, I am happy sending my child to the home.'

Children and young people's case records are reviewed regularly. The reviews also evaluate young people's progress during their residential stay. In some cases, updated care plans do not describe when agreed targets have been met. Additionally, a number of targets are routinely repeated over a period of time. This could result in missed opportunities to identify when children and young people have met their targets and when new challenges should be set.

Children and young people can participate in a variety of activities. Gym sessions that take place weekly at a sports resource in the community are popular with all the children and young people. All children and young people using the service participate in physical exercise at the gym club at some point during their stay or after school visits. A wide range of community activities take place regularly. These are chosen by children and young people. Since the last inspection trips to football stadiums, museums, parks and cinemas have taken place.

The home is well equipped and resourced. During inclement weather there is a variety of equipment and activities available to keep children and young people occupied. The home is spacious and well staffed, allowing children and young people to do a range of things in different areas of the building. Children and young people's art work is updated and displayed around the home, giving them a sense of involvement in how the home is presented.

Children's meetings continue to represent the views of all children and young people. A recent addition to seeking the views of children and young people is the wishing tree. Situated near the entrance, children and young people can express their wish on the tree. Wishes include being a princess for a day, playing basketball or going karting. These are reviewed and where possible the wishes are implemented.

There are plenty of visual aids in all areas of the home to promote communication with children and young people. These are at varying height levels to facilitate access to wheelchair users.

The home has not used any form of restraint. Staff are trained to manage

challenging behaviour using distraction and breakaway techniques. Staff know the children well and good planning ensures sufficient numbers of staff are available to manage all the children and young people effectively and ensure they enjoy their time in the home.

The home is maintained and cleaned to an exceptionally high standard making it a very comfortable and safe place for children and young people to spend time.

The staff work in partnership with parents, schools and children's services. Guidance is sought from health professionals to ensure a consistent approach to care is delivered. Instructions specific to meeting individual need are routinely followed to promote optimum health. Parents appreciate this seamless approach to their children's well being. One parent said, 'My child has short breaks with the same children they spend time with in primary school and some of the staff also work in the home. Everything is going well.' The home communicates and reports any concerns effectively to families and statutory agencies. Where required, staff contribute to meetings confidently.

Team meeting minutes show that all areas of the home's practice from the practical aspects of caring for children and young people are explored motivating staff to perform to a high standard. The staff team work well together supported by a committed and pro-active Registered Manager.

The home continues to facilitate a women's group, fathers' group and parents' forum. These are well attended.

Monthly monitoring reports are consistently provided to Ofsted. These always address all requirements set out in the Children's Homes Regulations 2011 and offer an insight into how well the home is functioning. Bi-annual monitoring reports also demonstrate the developments the home has made and their areas for improvement. Inspection reports are publicly accessible to parents and carers as well as staff.

The home provides excellent care and support to children and young people who as a result strive to do better.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- make sure that children develop skills and emotional resilience that will prepare them for independent living (NMS 2.6)
- ensure that each child's placement plan is monitored by a key worker within the home who ensures that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day to day care of that child (NMS 25.2)

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*.