

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	25/02/2014
Inspector	Natalie Burton
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	22/10/2013
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This service is registered to provide short breaks for up to four young people who have learning and/or physical disabilities. A local authority owns and operates this setting.

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 home was judged as good at the last inspection in October 2013. Since that time the manager has fully addressed two of the three recommendations that were raised and partially met a third. The home has continued to make significant progress, which has led to positive outcomes for children and young people.

Children and young people's safety is actively promoted in the home. This is because clear risk management systems are in place and the children's and young people's vulnerabilities are identified and carefully managed. Where children and young people pose specific risks, the staff team ensure that the action taken is proportionate. For example, where young people are at risk of self-harm through biting themselves or at risk of biting other people, staff implement strategies to distract them. As a result children and young people are safe at the home.

Children and young people are provided with a safe physical environment. This is because the organisation has taken sufficient precautions against the risk of fire by fitting new fire doors to the laundry area.

The organisation has purchased electronic media equipment, such as ipads for the children and young people, to further support the communication systems used within the home. Unfortunately the home is still waiting for internet access to be installed.

The Registered Manager is committed to making further improvements to the service provided. As an example, since the last inspection televisions have been installed in every child and young person's bedroom. Staff are diligent in ensuring all children and young people's needs are met. For example, making sure the television is set at the correct angle to enable them to watch from their most comfortable position. The televisions offer young people another activity; the opportunity to watch DVDs in their rooms.

Staff have purchased new storage cabinets. This benefits children and young people as they can easily access and choose activities they wish to do, such as arts and crafts, twiddles and sensory items. Being mobile, the cabinets can easily be moved to prevent damage or avoid distracting the children and young people.

The Registered Manager has implemented specific target plans for children and young people. These plans clearly provide staff with guidance on how to support children and young people to reach their goals, such as encouraging the young person to use their feet to kick a big ball. Children and young people benefit, as their confidence grows and they become more independent.

Children and young people continue to access activities inside and outside the home. They have been to Butterfly World, the library, golf and to the garden centre to buy spring bulbs for planting. Children and young people are regularly consulted and have chosen activities they would like to partake in the spring time, such as bowling, a train ride to Watford and swimming. It shows that children and young people are listened to and their views are taken into consideration. During the inspection there was a positive rapport between staff and children and young people. Staff were observed to be welcoming, enthusiastic, and keen to ensure that the children and young people enjoyed their stay.

Areas for improvement

Recommendations

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

- ensure children are supported to communicate in ways appropriate to their age and understanding. These may include communication via electronic media or, where the child has additional communication needs, with the use of suitable aids and equipment. (Children Act 1989, Guidance and Regulations, Volume 5: Children's Homes, paragraph 2.28)

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*.