

Inspection report for children's home

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Inspection date	08/02/2013
Inspector	Debbie Foster
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	10/07/2012
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Service information

Brief description of the service

This children's home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for up to three children of either gender, between the ages of eight and 17 who have a learning disability.

The home is fitted with minor aids and adaptations to help support children who may also have a physical disability.

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 **inadequate progress**.

This interim inspection focused on progress made since the last full inspection at which the judgement for overall effectiveness was good. The home is making inadequate progress. This is because the majority of recommendations made at the last inspection have not been implemented.

Although some young people continue to make progress in their lives, other young people's progress is declining. Staff are pro-active and have established routines to support and care for young people well. Despite this, some young people's behaviour has become challenging. This is impacting negatively on the daily life of all young people.

The staff team are committed and caring. They continue to provide sound and safe care to young people. One parent said 'My child is so much more independent and is

doing well at school. Visiting home is such a joy for us all now; staff have helped this to happen.' Parents say that their children have very good relationships with the staff and are well cared for. As a result, this has brought mutual trust and greater understanding which enables them to meet young people's individual needs. Staff have established good links with other professionals to assist in caring for young people appropriately. They have sought advice and support from a placing authority to establish how best to meet the needs of specific individual young people.

The home has met one requirement and one of the four recommendations made at the last inspection. Suitable staff recruitment information is held. In particular the full employment history is kept, together with satisfactory written explanations of any gaps in employment. This ensures as far as possible, that staff members do not pose a threat to the safety of young people. All staff have received training to extend their knowledge and skills in caring, supporting and meeting the needs of young people with severe learning disabilities.

Three recommendations have not been implemented in full. Young people's placement plans do not record all the progress each young person is making. This does not effectively demonstrate how young people make progress. The windows at the rear of the home have not been replaced. This does not ensure that children live in an environment that is maintained to a high standard. Although the majority of staff are trained in the home's agreed techniques in the use of physical restraint, one staff member has not undertaken this training. This does not ensure all staff know how to restrain young people safely and puts young people at risk of injury.

Further shortfalls have been identified during this inspection. Some restraint records do not record the duration of the event as required by the Regulations. This does not ensure that sufficient information is maintained to assist in the monitoring of these practices to protect young people. When the Regulation 33 monitoring reports identify timescales to bring improvement to the service, they have not always been adhered to. These include the replacement of windows in the home. Although, the reports cover all the required areas set out in the regulation, these sometimes lack detail and have not detected omissions relating to restraint records.

Monthly monitoring systems are in place and the operation of the home is monitored by the manager. However, a report of any review of this monitoring has not been sent to Ofsted as required at the appropriate intervals. This means the home cannot demonstrate that it reviews the quality of care fully to identify patterns and trends. This does not ensure effective improvements to the quality of care for young people.

Although the service has requested that the placing authority produces a pathway plan for a young person, no pathway plan has been devised. This impedes adequate planning and preparation for the future care of young people as they approach adulthood.

The toilet area is showing signs of wear and tear, with a rusting radiator, missing tiles and decolourisation to the window frame. This means that young people live in a home where facilities are not maintained throughout to a high standard.

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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, discipline or restraint, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose which shall include the matters listed under paragraphs (3) and (4). In particular, record the duration of the restraint (Regulation 17B (4)(a))	28/03/2013
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for improving the quality of care provided in the children's home. In particular, address deficiencies identified in a timely manner, giving specific details of any physical interventions used and shortfalls in the environment. (Regulation 34 (1) (b)	28/03/2013

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home contributes to the development of each child's care plan, including the pathway plan for "eligible" care leavers and works collaboratively with the young person's social worker or personal adviser in implementing the plan (NMS12.2)
- 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 particular ensure all areas of the plan are specific and clearly evidence the progress each young person is making (NMS 25.2)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable environment that is well maintained and decorated; in particular that the window replacement and toilet refurbishment is completed (NMS 10.3)
- ensure all staff are trained in the use of physical restraint techniques and only use the home's agreed techniques. In particular, provide this training to new staff before they commence working with young people (NMS 3.15)
- ensure that visits to the home carried out under Regulation 33 include relevant checks set out in regulations and guidance and checks of any disciplinary measures, the use of restraint and records of missing person's reports (NMS 21.7)

- take action to address any issues of concern that are identified in written reports of visits carried out under Regulation 33 (NMS 21.9)
- ensure effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the home. In particular, ensure that a report identifying trends and issues of concern is completed at six monthly intervals and a copy is sent to HMCI within 28 days of completion. (Volume 5, statutory guidance, para 3.14)

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*.